

2dartist



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120

Issue 120 | December 2015

Paint light and color

Create a light-filled,
atmospheric fantasy
scene with this tutorial
from Christoph Peters

plus

- 10 of the best digital images
- **Paint like the Impressionists**
- Create a sleek interior
- **and much more!**

Editor's Letter



ANNIE MOSS
Junior Editor

2dartist is now on
Facebook!

Welcome to 2dartist issue 120!

Hello and welcome to issue 120 of 2dartist magazine! In this month's issue we have an interview with Lip Comarella, the art director behind animation studio Salon Alpin. We are also talking to traditional artist Scarlett Fu and get a peek at the sketches of the highly popular Marija Tiurina.

This issue also features a tutorial by Ian Jun Wei Chiew on how to speed paint a futuristic interior. Wadim Kashin guides us on how to paint in Photoshop like the traditional Impressionist painters, while Christoph Peters gives a tutorial on painting a fantasy character on a throne. Oscar Gregeborn also shows how to paint an underwater alien landscape. Plus – check out our new competition on page 41!

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Contributors



LIP COMARELLA

Coming from the heart of the Italian Alps, Lip currently works as an art director at Salon Alpin. The animation studio focuses on mixed media solutions for advertising games and films.



SCARLETT FU

Scarlett is a London-based graphic designer and illustrator. While doodling on the bus, the illustrated series *Busy City* was born. She currently freelances to become an environment concept artist.



MARIJA TIURINA

Marija Tiurina is a multimedia design graduate, illustrator and character artist currently based in London. She works as a concept artist by daylight and a freelance illustrator by night.



WADIM KASHIN

Wadim Kashin is a self-taught artist based in Moscow, Russia. Interested in art from a young age, Wadim started drawing seriously in 2008 and he now works as a freelance artist.



IAN JUN WEI CHIEW

Ian Jun Wei Chiew is a concept artist and illustrator working in the film and gaming industry. He currently works at Sucker Punch Productions in addition to freelance work.



OSCAR GREGEBORN

Oscar Gregeborn is an up-and-coming artist from Oslo, Norway. He continues to study art and design while making a living and growing his reputation with his freelance work.



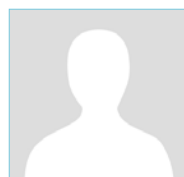
LUIGI MEMOLA

Luigi Memola is a senior vehicle concept designer and the founder of EPTA Design Ltd. He works on projects ranging from function-driven, advanced transportation, to visionary conceptual art.



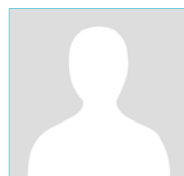
ARTHUR HAAS

Arthur Haas is a concept artist and illustrator from Amsterdam, Netherlands, with a passion for science fiction. He has worked on a variety of book and film project since 2011.



CHRISTOPH PETERS

Christoph Peters is a freelance concept artist living in Chile. He creates illustrations for games, graphic novels and books, specializing in fantasy illustrations with an emphasis on color and light.



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We are always looking for tutorial artists, gallery submissions, potential interviewees, writers and more. For more information, please send a link to your work to: annie@3dtotal.com.

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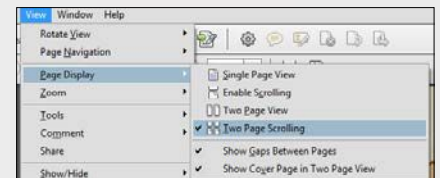
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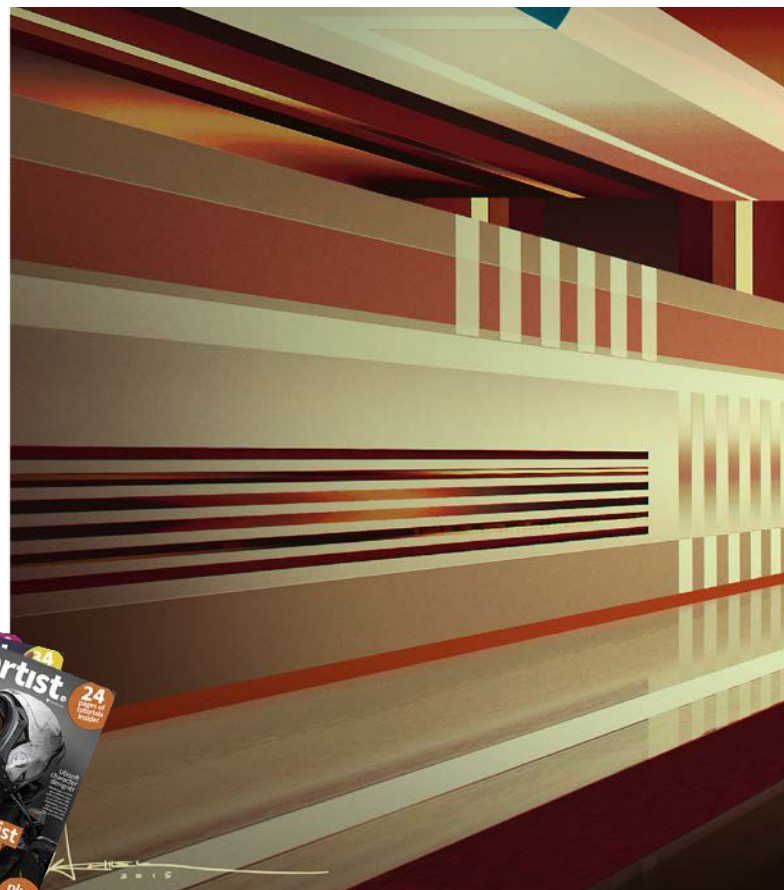
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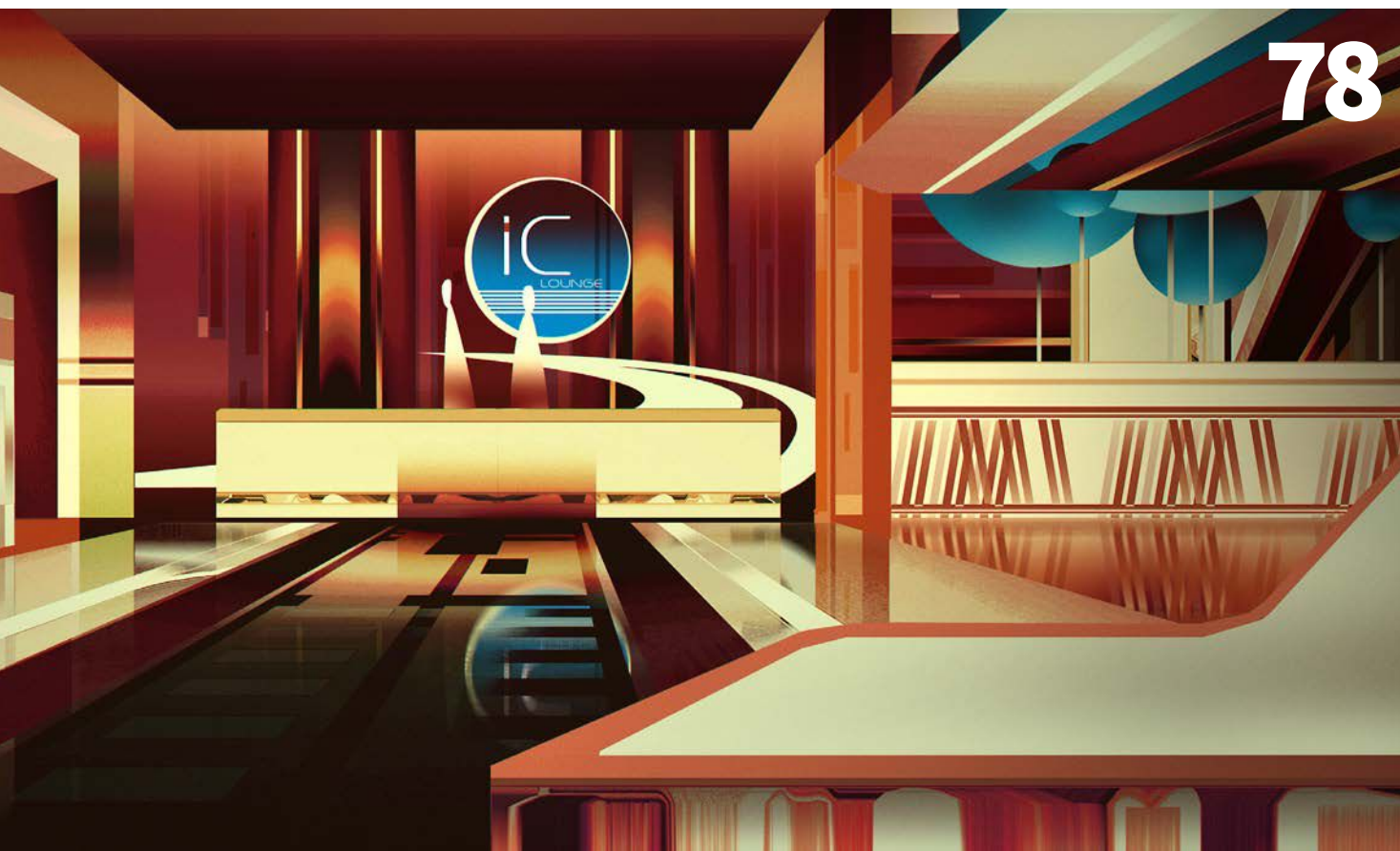
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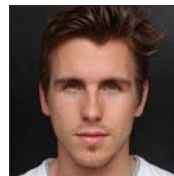




Innovative animation

Art director Lip Comarella gives us a look behind the scenes at the visual production studio Salon Alpin ▶

The Artist



Lip Comarella
salonalpin.net

Interviewed by:
Annie Moss

Coming from the heart of the Italian Alps, Lip currently works as art director at Salon Alpin. The animation studio focuses on mixed media solutions for advertising games and films.

Although he began his career at an advertising agency, Lip Comarella found that his desire to create work with an emphasis on art and craftsmanship demanded a change in direction. Mid-way through a Master diploma in advertising, Lip turned his attention to exploring ways of visually expressing human emotion resulting in his short film, *Much Better Now*.

The animation centered on a bookmark character stuck in a forgotten book, who discovers a new world of endless challenges when chance frees him from the book pages.

The film has since won a number of awards and launched Lip's career in animation. In 2012, Lip opened the visual production studio Salon Alpin

with his creative partner Simon Griesser. The studio combines a number of creative fields, from visual art to animation, typography to film direction, in order to develop inventive new ways to promote products and businesses.

Their ethos is to combine different creative practices which promote the artistic handicraft and simple storytelling. This month Lip tells us about working as a visual developer, collaborating with artists from different disciplines, and maintaining a strong sense of narrative in his work.

2dartist: Hi Lip, thank you for talking to 2dartist! Can you start things off by telling us a bit about yourself and your work?

Lip Comarella: Thank you for having me. In short, I left my small town in the Italian Alps to pursue a creative education in Vienna. While still studying I started to work at an advertising agency but never really enjoyed it, so just before my final diploma I decided that I wasn't going to be happy without a strong visual, crafty and artistic component in my life.

I was also interested in the visual expression of human emotion and the principles of simple and clear communication, so working in animation seemed a good plan and an ideal match for me. Therefore I tried my very best to acquire the technical skills and fundamentals to be able to do so for the following two years on evenings and weekends. Eventually the result was my diploma work, a short film called *Much Better Now*. I still get a little ►

● A Round brush exploration of sharp strokes and color





"A new world order"

tree #5

LIT

- Lip uses these personal works to explore his individual style



emotional when watching those six minutes of stop-motion/CG hybrid.

Right now I direct the art team at Salon Alpin, a Vienna and Lisbon based production studio for animated content. I am happy to have made this step and feel lucky to have this opportunity.

2da: Salon Alpin likes to combine creative disciplines; what benefits come from working with a team with such diverse creative talents?

LC: Working in visual production always needs diverse input together with quick and compact feedback. I don't mean the kind of feedback-letters your client would give you. I talk about those little comments or that second pair of eyes that help you to see your work in a new perspective quickly.

If I, for example, work on a concept for an upcoming production, the feedback from Simon (our director/scriptwriter/ animator) is very likely to focus on motion. He is looking at all parts of the story,

analyzing where the message came from and where it needs to evolve in order to make sense. Sometimes feedback also sets crucial technical boundaries for myself which helps to eliminate some options and helps not to get lost. On the other hand discussion about an idea or a design with Daniela (our traditionally trained sculptor, paper and 3D artist) brings me to a whole new level in terms of space, volume and materiality. We all understand and see the world in so many different ways; it would be a shame limiting us to our own mental barriers.

“I feel like the eternal struggle to escape the obvious is probably one of the bigger challenges in all my artistic output”

Besides feedback, a team like the one at Salon Alpin gives my rough concepts or starting points all options of output. It can be print work, it can be content for games, it can be video content for museums or TV broadcasting assets as well as classic TV commercial work, a graphic might be modeled in clay, other things will get 3D printed and laser-cut, and so on.

2da: When collaborating with other artists, how do you strike up a balance between your independent creative styles?

LC: I guess it is about setting clear goals and having clear roles within the team. I don't push my visual style to the front. My style is just one opinion out of many, and I am thrilled to hear more stylistic point of views.

Of course someone needs to set the boundaries for consistent work. In an ideal world I see my starting point evolve and get so much richer by working together with my team and the external artists that work with us. They filter the initial vision and add up their own impressions. If a nice blend of styles is reached we focus on conveying the message as well as possible. Good preparation and precise goals that are outlined clearly to everyone involved are key to a successful collaboration.

2da: What do you find most challenging about working as a visual developer?

LC: I feel like the eternal struggle to escape the obvious is probably one of the bigger challenges in all my artistic output. In depth preparation, fighting laziness and comfort zones is something I have to consider and conquer all the time. If you do your homework properly first, the greater the reward will be when you complete a project.

The ultimate challenge for me as a visual developer is in finding a way into the hearts of the audience, to create that subtle balance between the style and the subject matter that makes your work transcend the project itself.

2da: Do you have any tricks or tips to keep yourself motivated on a difficult project?

LC: Overall I think being able to do what I like every day keeps my motivation on a reasonable level. Of course we all know those days were we wish you could just go to the next coffee shop or zoo and ►



● Lip finds inspiration in films and videogames for these personal works; this one was inspired by *The Witcher*

If you could write a letter to your younger self, just starting out, what advice would you give?

Well it's hard to answer this one, as it feels to me I am still just starting out really. But if I had to advise my younger self four years ago, I would say get your week, your day and your hour as structured and planned out as much as possible. Keep track of what you learn and don't keep doing the same mistakes. Take more risks and grow with the challenges.

From the moment I realized that setting myself short-term reachable goals works out best for me, and keeps me growing, things started to improve quite quickly. I wish I had done it that way from the beginning. So good habits and even better time control is, in my opinion, a basic requirement for any form of professional satisfaction. Also I would probably tell myself 'read more books and play less *StarCraft*'.

● Concept color mood keys for a short commercial sequence, *Falter Inferno*
Image credit: © Falter/Jung von Matt Donau





• This key visual was inspired by ideas of sparks and danger





● A shot of one the characters in production. © Montblanc/Scholz & Friends Berlin

scribble the day away, without having to find that one right solution for the problem that stands in your way.

When I feel I lose steam or catch myself procrastinating, I take a step back, take a deep breath and try to remind myself what in particular can be learned from this specific task. How the solution to this matter will help me to grow? If I am lucky the idea of self improvement gives me that extra push to get this over with. Switching between projects has proven to be helpful for me to not get stuck within decreasing motivation.

2da: What are your preferred tools to work with, generally? Are there any tools you find yourself using again and again?

LC: I don't think I qualify as a particularly technical digital artist, even though for efficiency reasons I try to use all the new tools that make our work easier, faster and gets the message across. I don't think anyone cares how stuff is made as long as it connects with the audience.

If I had to pick I would always go for those tools that have a minimal technical barrier and let the artistic or intuitive process go as freely and un-compromised as possible. In terms of packages I use Photoshop, After Effects and CINEMA 4D to get stuff out of my head. I write down a lot in a little notebook as the act of writing causes me to remember stuff better.

2da: Your personal works feature a lot of bold colors with plenty of energy; how do you stop yourself from over-working your images?

LC: I am cursed with some degree of impatience, so over-working images isn't a huge issue for me. Nevertheless, the danger of falling into the trap of over-thinking and over-rendering a piece is always around the corner. As soon as my neck gets too stiff or my back hurts I know in general I have been noodling around too long.

I try my very best to be able to call it as soon as my intention is clear and working. On the other hand sometimes you just love the process of drawing, painting or designing so there is definitely also a

room for projects that just serve as a personal source of joy and satisfaction.

2da: What do you like to focus on in your personal work? Are you a little more experimental in your personal projects?

LC: The little experience I have so far already told me one thing: clients don't like risks or experiments, they prefer a reliable pipeline they know and understand. So my personal work tends to be that missing playground where you are allowed to be wrong, delete everything and start over again. In some cases your personal exploration produces a new style or approach to your work that you end up being hired for in your next professional project. As mentioned above, my personal work is a mixture of exploration and pure therapy; doing what gives me peace.

2da: How do your personal projects help you to develop your professional work?

LC: When I start a new personal project I always focus on things I want to learn, dive into and discover. ►

🕒 Artist Timeline Lip's career so far

2011: Master diploma in advertising at the University of Applied Arts Vienna

2011: Career u-turn from advertising and release of *Much Better Now*

2012: Opening of Salon Alpin animation studio with partner Simon Griesser

2014: Animation projects for Montblanc and creative partnership with ESL gaming

2015: Work featured in multiple publications and platforms



Lip's creative turning point

It was with no doubt my very first animated project and short film *Much Better Now* that served as a turning point for what I am and do right now. On the verge of giving up my graphic ambitions and working in advertising, this one loose story script of a bookmark stuck in its own forgotten book was the initial sparkle that let me meet the right people and learning the right tools to change my perspectives.

That improvised movie set in an old basement with no internet, cell phone coverage or heating served as an ideal place to prove myself and self-reflect on my intentions. In retrospect I can say that there is very little that makes you question your motivations as hard as a stop-motion production. After the movie was done and it turned out fine, I saw my chance at doing it professionally.



● A still from *Much Better Now* the short film which signaled a turning point in Lip's career

These topics are mainly about visual language and techniques and how to combine analog and digital tools in an unusual way. So most of the personal works I do start out as a challenge I give to myself. The experiment then becomes more down to earth and sometimes leads to a valid execution of an artwork series. All of that influences my professional work deeply.

Basically there are no boundaries between learning something new for personal projects and implementing it to whatever professional project comes next. It is a constant drive.

2da: How do you go about maintaining a strong sense of narrative in your work?

LC: As a kid me and my brother loved to make up stories. We imagined what happened when our heroes, in between the action scenes, of our favorite movies or cartoons had to go to the bathroom and what would happen to them when there was no camera. It was great fun and produced some of the most insane and whimsical plots ever. I think realizing and being aware of the fact that every

image or frame you design has a past and a future, strengthens up the narrative of every story piece.

When it comes to animation at Salon Alpin, it is all about the script and mood boards and about working on it as a team. It is vital to stay on the same track with everybody involved. Everybody should feel the story and should be able to read between the lines. Moods, expression, feedback, music, light, color, camera; everything is driven by this internal notion of understanding the narrative path that your production is based on.

2da: Where (and when) do you feel you are at your most creative?

LC: According to the cliché of being a man I am terrible at multitasking or juggling around different things at the same time. So over the last few years I've realized my brain activity is the most productive when I can focus and reflect on one single thing at a time; even better if I can minimize all other information coming from various bodily senses. A fun fact is that I have come across my best ideas or concepts while sitting in the sauna, in the dark, with

nothing really to care about but sitting and getting my thoughts rolling. Nothing to look at, nothing to hear and not even distracted by my own clothing!

Apart from this, as a team player I think creatively I work best while interacting with other people, bouncing ideas and thoughts back and forth.

2da: You also sometimes work with traditional art materials. What advantages do these materials give you over digital work?

LC: Sadly I am a terrible traditional painter and sculptor. It probably can be backtracked to my tendency for impatience that made me mediocre at mixing colors, or learning all those wonderful analog techniques lots of my colleagues master so well. This is very unfortunate.

Nonetheless I miss the inherent physical limits of traditional media compared to the digital: the way watercolor disperses on the paper, how carved wood looks and behaves or paper bends and folds. I find it easier to produce a true coherent feeling to my work with traditional art materials. ►

- Stills from the animated narration produced for Montblanc's international Christmas campaign
© Montblanc/Scholz & Friends Berlin



- Aside from some particle and color correction these sets were entirely handcrafted.
© Montblanc/Scholz & Friends Berlin



- The story follows a young woman in snowy Paris, in a tale written by Tatiana de Rosnay
© Montblanc/Scholz & Friends Berlin



- Salon Aplin collaborated with a number of paper modelers to create the scenes and characters
©Montblanc/Scholz & Friends Berlin



- Each character and set was handcrafted
© Montblanc/Scholz & Friends Berlin



Every real physical media is unmatched in terms of richness and variance. We all struggle to bring that 'soul' into our digital productions that all physical material automatically has. Sometimes I wish I had an original piece of my work, to hang on the wall, a unique creation to hand my future kids some day.

2da: What was it about the digital tools that made you want to pursue a career in the industry?

LC: To be honest I feel the real reason I started to draw in Photoshop is because it was the least complicated (as a teenager I may have referred to it as 'less annoying') way to paint. I mean it in terms of getting all the right materials, setting up your working

space, learning all those so fundamental preparatory tasks that are not directly connected with making an image or visualizing a story. Photoshop was just about sitting down and starting to do (terrible) stuff right away.

The digital tools are – as you say – tools only. I change them a lot except for the core tools that everyone uses. Maybe it's not me being in the industry because of the tools, but the tools are following me. If they cannot keep up with me, I let them go and vice versa. Of course the main feature of digital production is versatility, efficiency and non-destructive workflows, with little to no expense on production equipment.

2da: Finally, where will we be able to see your work next? Are there any projects we should look out for?

LC: First of all, the incredibly talented designer, artist and director Daniela Leitner is about to release her animated short film which we worked on for the last two years; I really can't wait to see it done. I know it's a huge deal for her and all of us. On a side note we are working with an independent game developing studio helping to design and animate their cut scenes. I really like their game idea and mechanics so we are all excited to contribute something to the whole experience. ●

Thank you Lip for chatting to 2dartist!

ANATOMY FOR 3D ARTISTS

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE FOR CG PROFESSIONALS

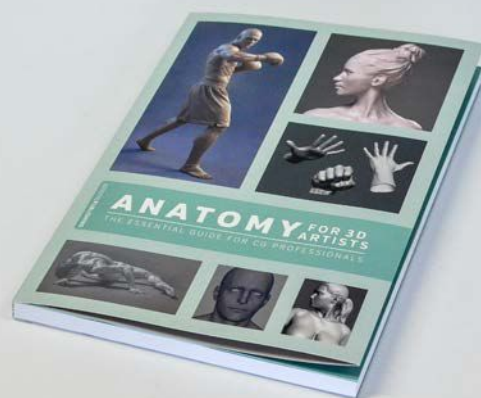


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Scarlett Fu
scarlettfu.com

Software Used:
Photoshop

Scarlett is a London-based graphic designer and illustrator. While doodling on the bus, the illustrated series 'Busy City' was born. She currently freelances to become an environment concept artist.

A R T I S T S P O T L I G H T

Crowd-inspired drawings

Graphic designer and illustrator Scarlett Fu shows us her personal projects and talks about how traditional art has aided her digital work ▶

Originally from Hong Kong, Scarlett Fu studied for a Master's degree in Graphic Branding and Identity at the University of the Arts, London. Since completing her course in 2011 she has established herself as a graphic designer who specializes in branding, advertising and illustration. Her freelance work has seen her work appear in a number of different projects for a variety of clients across the world, including product branding, graphics, logo design and illustration.

In her spare time, Scarlett also works on a number of personal projects such as her *Busy City* series of illustrations which she produces in a sketchbook when commuting. The opportunity to concentrate allows Scarlett to relax in this stressful environment. Another of Scarlett's personal projects, *Project Samurai*, is an ongoing self-initiated digital project to bring to life the imaginary worlds Scarlett has created in her mind.

Here, Scarlett talks to 2dartist about the various ideas behind her work, drawing to relax and how creating traditional art has aided her digital artwork.

2dartist: Hello Scarlett! Thanks for talking to 2dartist. First off, could you introduce yourself with a bit about your background and projects?

Scarlett Fu: Thank you for the opportunity. It is an honor to be here! I've always experimented with pens, painting, screen-printing and etching. I studied for a BA Graphic and Media Design, and later, an MA in Graphic Branding and Identity at the London College of Communication. ►

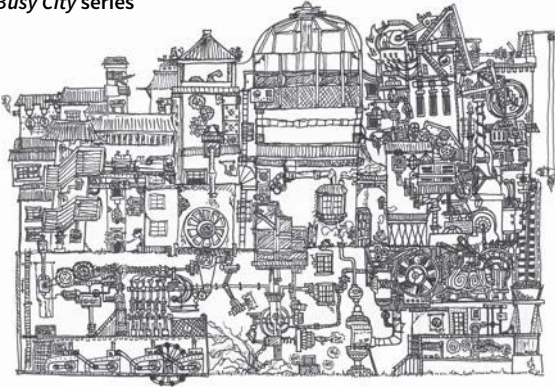
- Scarlett likes to create fantasy paintings in her spare time



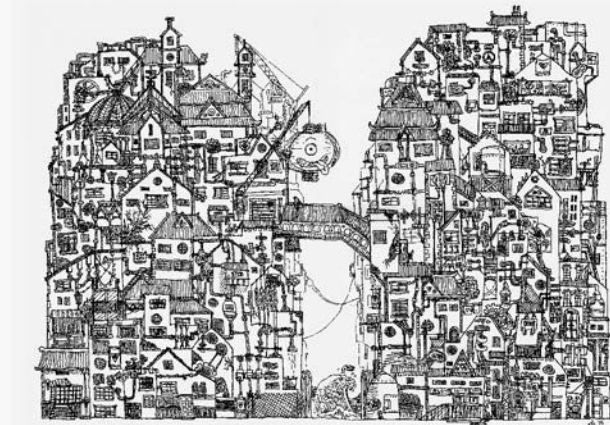
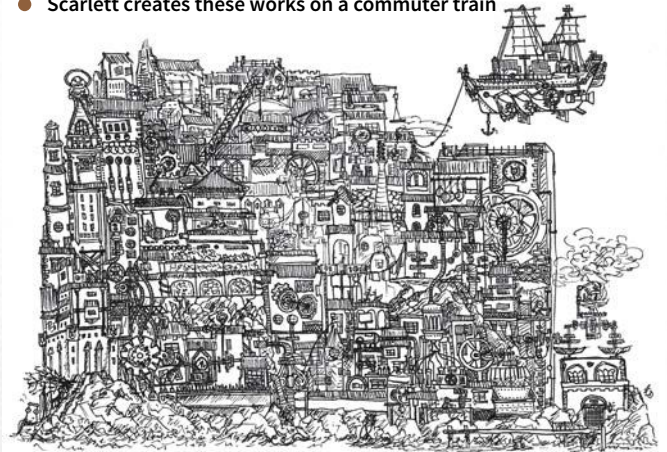
- Scarlett likes to create fantasy paintings in her spare time



- A drawing from the *Busy City* series



- Scarlett creates these works on a commuter train

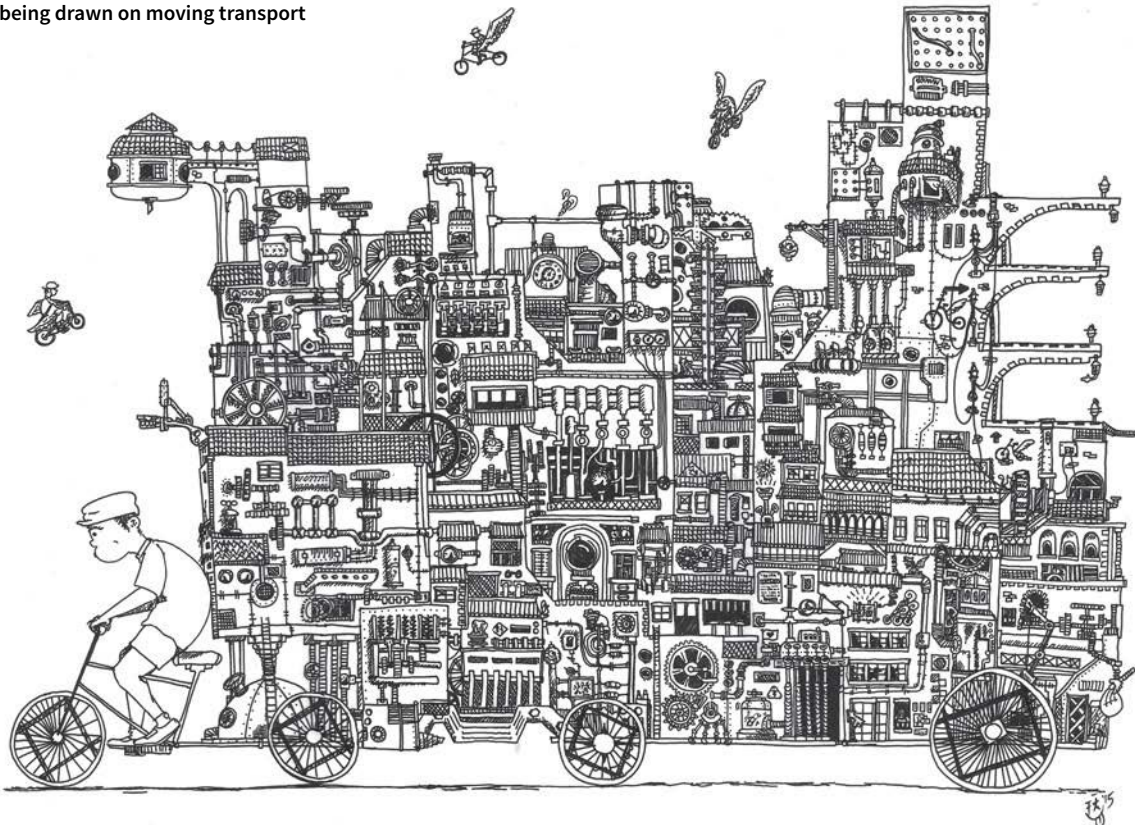


- The divide between built up areas in this image provides a contrast which stops the images becoming overwhelming

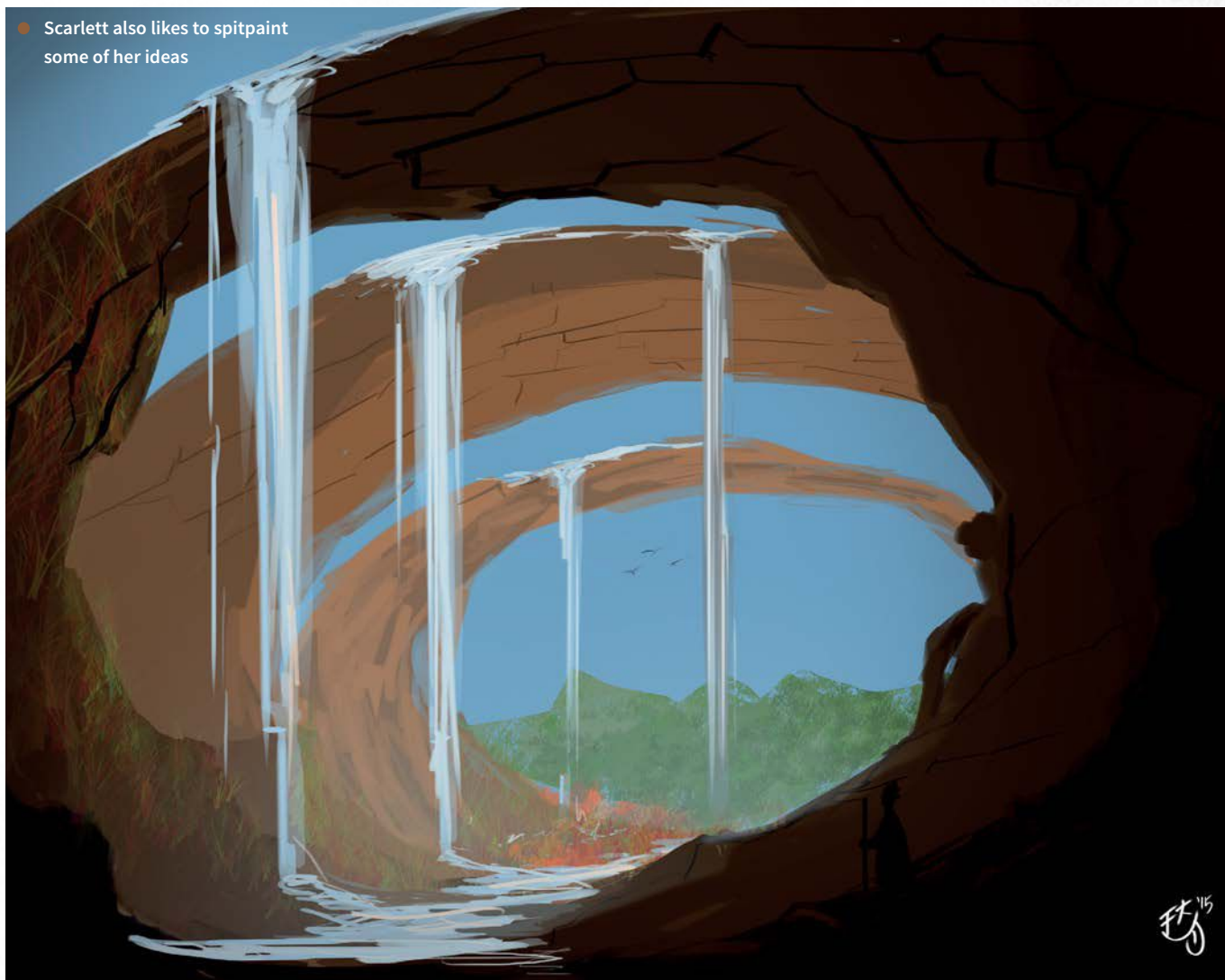
- Scarlett's interest in architecture has influenced this series



- So far Scarlett's *Busy City* drawings have been faultless despite being drawn on moving transport



- Scarlett also likes to spitpaint some of her ideas



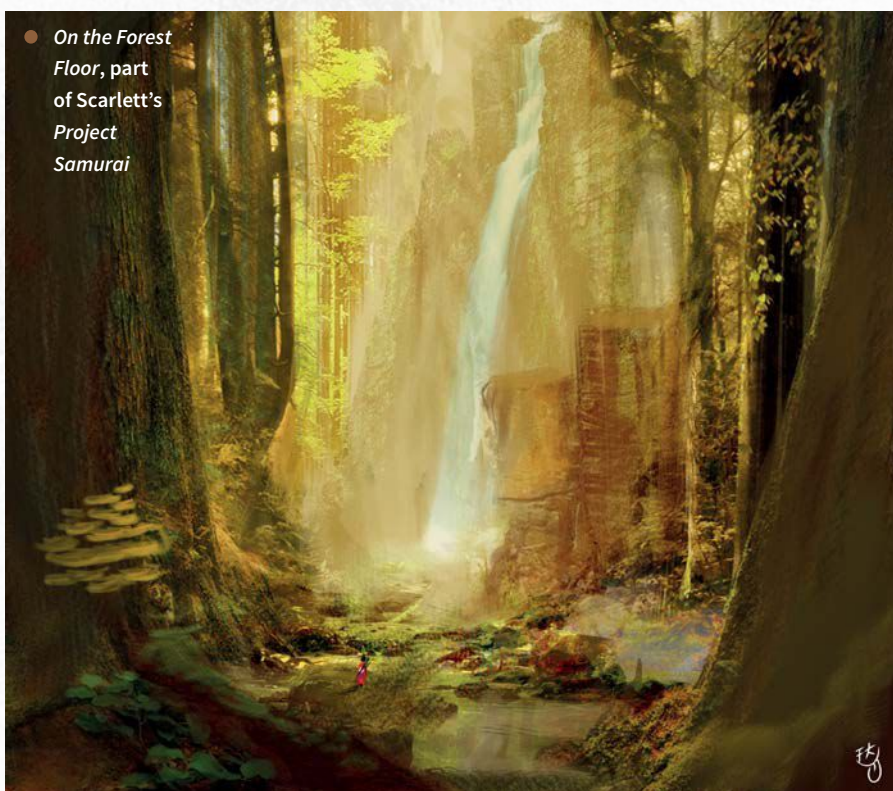
In 2012, I was honored with the Gold Award in the Graphis Poster Annual for my image *Adventure of Silver Blaze*, an homage to my favorite sleuth Sherlock Holmes. I currently freelance to allow more time to work on personal projects, such as *Busy City* and the on-going, self-initiated project called *Project Samurai*.

2da: You have said in the past that you are driven by ideas and stories; when you are creating a new work what is it that develops first for you? The idea or the story?

SF: The idea always comes first, and it can come from anything. Random words, things you hear on the street, mind maps (I do like creating mind maps. A lot!) What comes next depends on how the ideas unravel to become the story.

I am entranced by vivid descriptions and fantastical environments in books, videogames, films and Manga that bring the fictitious worlds to life. You'd often catch me watching movies, notably by Studio Ghibli, Disney and Pixar among others. I'll watch them more than once to marvel ►

- On the Forest Floor, part of Scarlett's Project Samurai



● A citadel street scene



● The Portal, another image from Project Samurai



**“Take your time, don’t rush.
Enjoy the process as much as
the outcome of your work”**

at the lighting, soak up the beauty of the scenery, the characters’ emotions, and importantly, the story itself.

2da: When creating *Busy City* where did you look for inspiration?

SF: I’m quite a fan of architecture and how it creates a relationship between the sky and its surrounding buildings. London is filled to the brim with a variety of architectural styles; one discovers the many sides of historical and modern aspects of the city with a sketchbook and pen.

Otherwise, I draw from my head. I find it a relaxing and fun way to pass the time while traveling to and from work, allowing the cities to develop and reveal themselves on the page. I have gotten

some lovely compliments from strangers along the way (thank you)!

2da: Your drawings for this series are particularly detailed and multifarious, how did you keep these illustrations from becoming over-worked and messy?

SF: My experience as a graphic designer helps immensely to reduce visuals to their core essence without jeopardizing the tale behind them. When I draw, I tend to be a lot more relaxed and open my mind up to whatever comes to my head, and surprisingly, every single *Busy City* illustration has been without fault so far, and this is while being on moving transport!

In the case of *Busy Cities*, contrast is a tremendously handy method to create atmosphere by emphasizing certain areas of the image, without overwhelming the viewer with too much information.

2da: When working traditionally, what are your preferred tools to work with and why?

SF: When working traditionally, my preferred tools would be pens and paper. They can be used anywhere and allow for doodling and jotting down ideas on-the-go; it helps to think visually this way. I mostly work with pencils, fine liners and ink-brush pens, giving a variety of tones and emotions from random shapes. Being a graphic designer as well, I consider the paper stock used when a more substantial piece of drawing is being created, where I’d be taking into consideration the emotions according to the paper’s stock weight, color and texture.

2da: What advice can you give to our readers who want to develop their drawings into more complex illustrations like yours?

SF: Go for a walk, explore the environment around you. Read books, and lots of them! Go



to museums. Stay curious. Take your time, don't rush. Enjoy the process as much as the outcome of your work.

Find out how things work. Explore different methods, different types of medium to work and experiment with. Showcase and get critiques for your work, learn from them. And importantly, keep drawing!

2da: Although you began as a traditional artist you have now developed your skills into the digital art industry. How has your background in traditional fine art enhanced your digital work?

SF: Hugely! In fine art, drawing or sketching from life is very important in training your eye in capturing the right tones and lighting.

When we paint digitally, we want to imitate the characteristics and qualities of real life to a certain degree before adding fantasy elements if desired.

So having the knowledge in traditional art is useful when you want to embark on digital art. The most important thing, digital or traditional, would be to learn the fundamentals in color and composition. Digital painting simply makes it a faster process of creating work.

2da: What skills and techniques, either traditional or digital, would you like to learn in the future?

SF: In the traditional aspect, I would like to allow myself to be freer when I sketch, to notice the important parts of a figure or an object through observation rather than shading and focusing on details all the time.

In the digital realm, I want to learn more and improve on the composition and perspectives of my paintings, which is where *Project Samurai* comes in to keep track of my progress. I would also like to learn more about 3D software in general, to make my workflow more efficient in

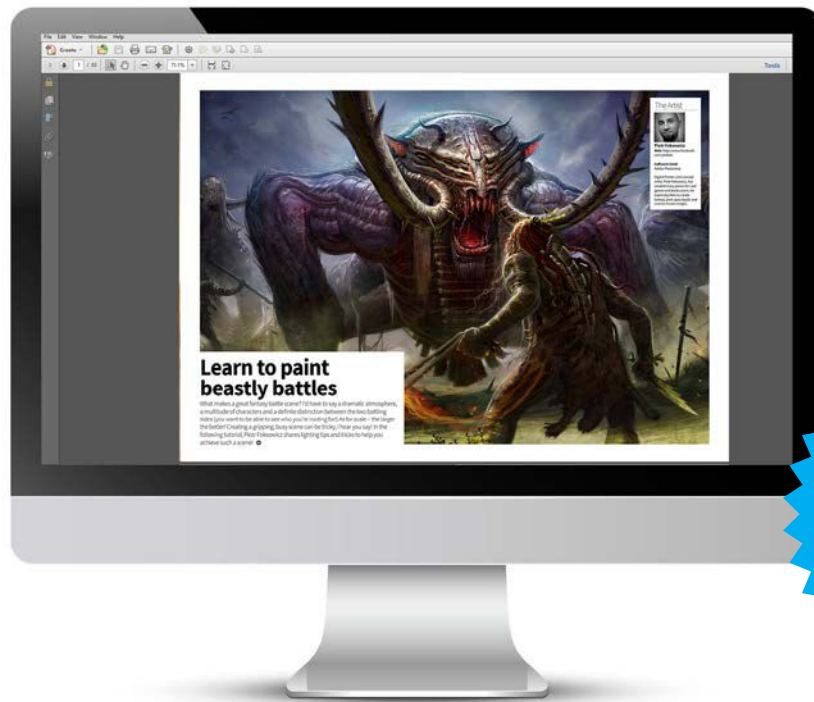
blocking out environments before I start each of my pieces.

2da: And finally, what can we expect from you in the future?

SF: Hopefully many great things! I would love to create a game in the future, I don't want to talk too much about it as there are lots of rough ideas in my head which I haven't yet put down on paper or screen.

In the meantime, some of my work has been showcased at exhibitions lately. In addition to the continuing development of both the *Project Samurai* and *Busy City* projects, I aim to find a more definitive style that I can embrace as my own. I hope that this can lead to commissions in illustration and environment concept art.

Thank you for taking the time to speak to 2dartist today! ●



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MARIJA TIURINA

Sketchbook

London-based illustrator Marija Tiurina lets us see what goes into creating her fascinating character art and line drawings

The Artist



Marija Tiurina
marijatiurina.com

Marija Tiurina is a multimedia design graduate, illustrator and character artist based in London. She now works as a concept artist by day and as a freelance illustrator by night.

See the inventive sketches behind her illustrations...

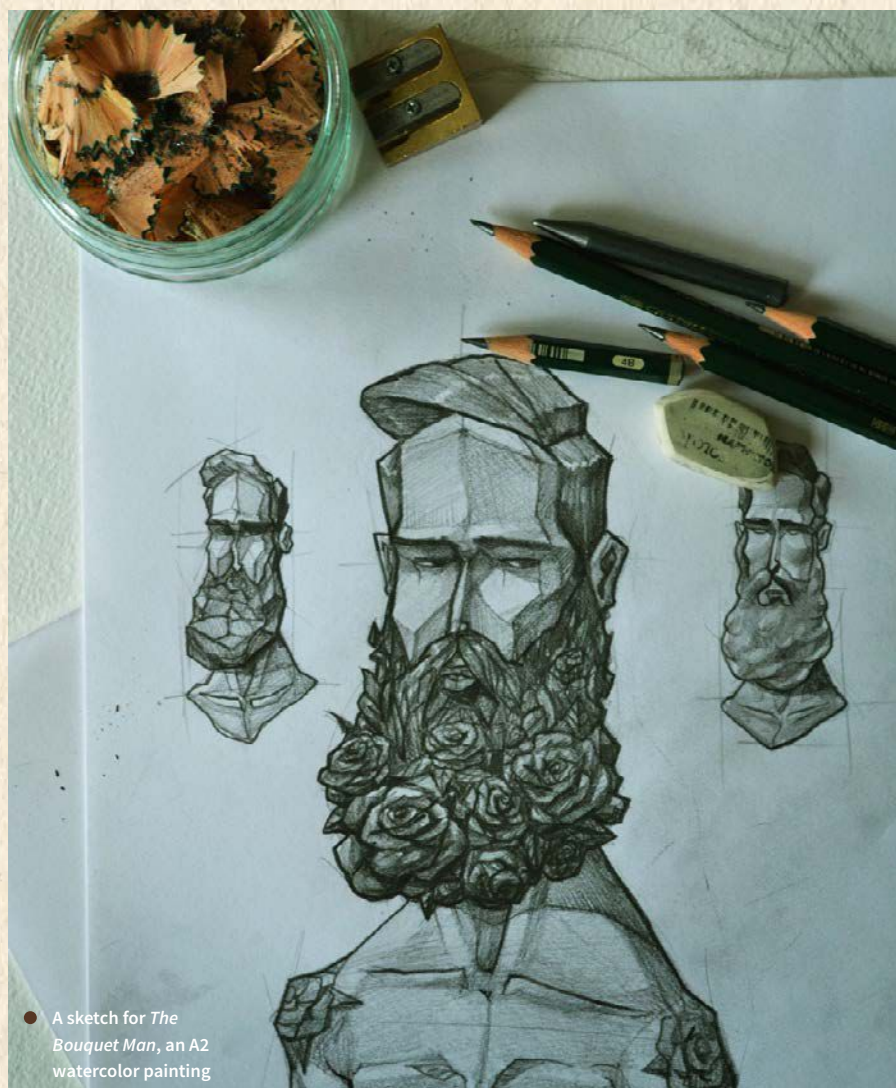
I started drawing at a very young age, at first drawing and painting memories from nursery rhymes. My older sister was a great influence as she was the one who could hold a pencil well and I asked her multiple times to teach me how to draw.

With time she switched to other topics of interest while I continued to fall in love with drawing, and when I was in high school I realized this is what I want to do for a living.

A sketchbook is a collection of thoughts, processes and ideas. It's great to have one, two or ten, as these notebooks or albums are little factories of the creative mind. Sketching is useful because it creates a base.

After that it's all about the process, though the base is what defines the direction and the outcome of this process. It is hard to estimate the highlights of my career as I see myself traveling in quite a steady way, sometimes taking part in contests and exhibitions, sometimes hiding from everyone and keeping my drawings to myself.

I think that the best motivation is knowing that there's no limit to perfection, and with every new piece you can feel yourself grow; it is quite rewarding. ▶



● A sketch for *The Bouquet Man*, an A2 watercolor painting



● A sketch for reimagining the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*

● The completed image *Aquarius* was finished digitally



SKETCHBOOK OF MARIJA TUKINA

● A selection of sketches for Marija's personal project illustrating zodiac signs



A painted sketch representing Gemini for Marija's zodiac signs project



The Magic of Motion is a digital painting developed from a simple portrait study



“I love the detailed pencil and ink drawings and the way the material just stands out from the whiteness of paper”

Inspiration and ideas

I get tons of inspiration from online art posts by artists, magazines and galleries. I love the works of a number of contemporary artists and painters like James Jean, Ozabu, Sam Wolfe Connelly, Hsiao Ron Cheng, Casey Weldon, Sachin Teng, Joanne Nam and many others.

I don't personally go to many galleries (and I keep telling myself off for that) but I will always make sure to catch up with the online galleries and ongoing exhibitions.

Most of my ideas come to me when I least expect them. Sometimes it happens as I ride my bike through London streets, or when I'm having a coffee in a nearby cafe, or when looking at other people's work.

I have plenty of ideas and I rarely trash one until I give it a try. It might sound great in my head but then the sketching stage proves me wrong, and I trash it or put it aside until better times.

Materials

My favorite materials are probably watercolor and ink. I also love pencils and digital painting. The best thing is being able to have variety in materials and techniques; this way you never get tired of what you use. I love the detailed pencil

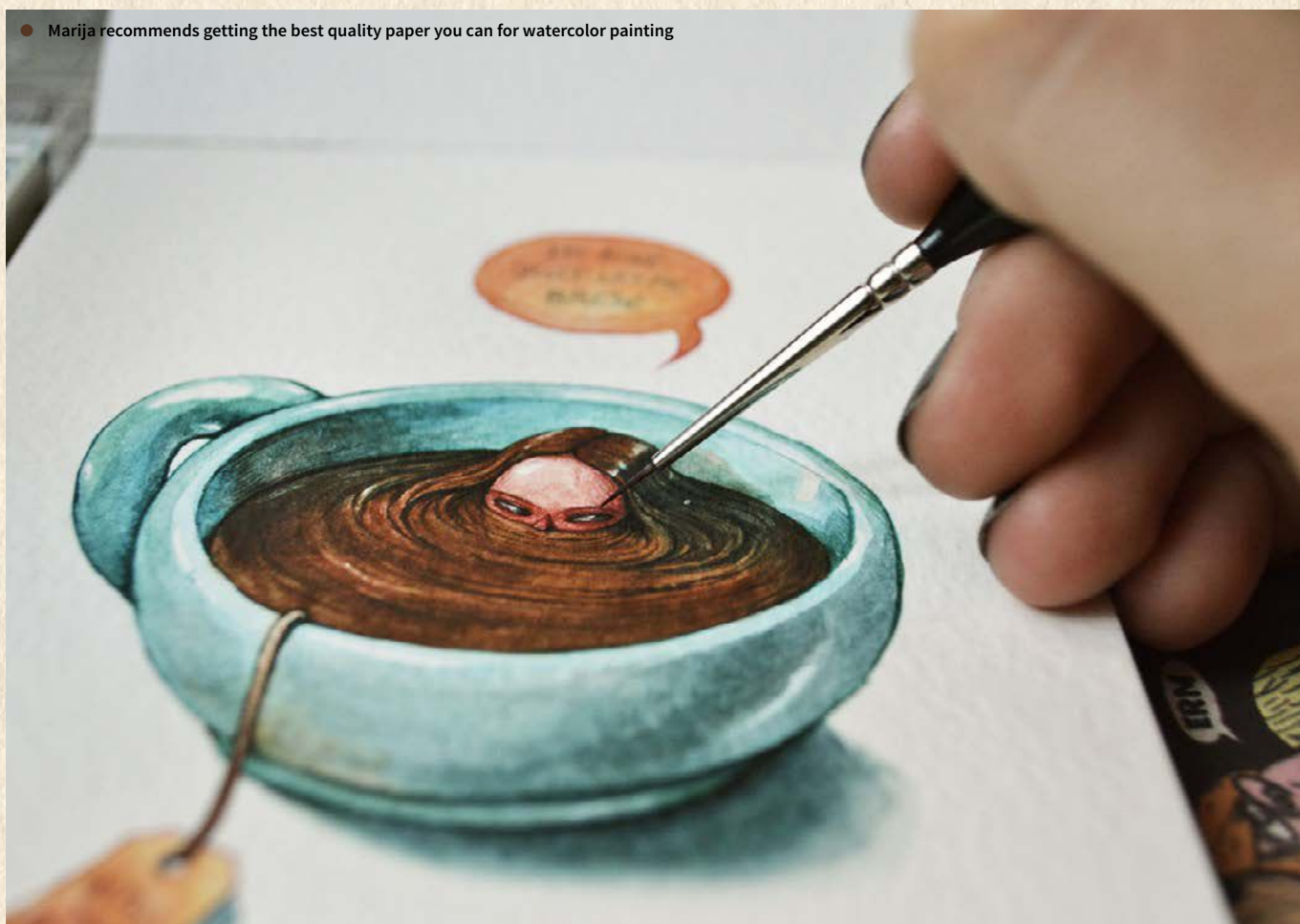
and ink drawings and the way the material just stands out from the whiteness of paper. I have tried many other materials and discovered that I am rubbish with oil and acrylics, and am not very good with pastels. But I am sure that this would change if I spent loads of time practicing the use of these materials. Unfortunately, I do not have all of the time in the world for this – if only!

I wouldn't say I favor particular brands. I stick with whatever's good, and do not buy a product that is of a particular brand just out of principle. Sometimes I get a little tired of my beloved paints, pens and pencils and switch to something new. But very soon I realized that I miss my 'family' like crazy and it always feels great to come back home to them. ►

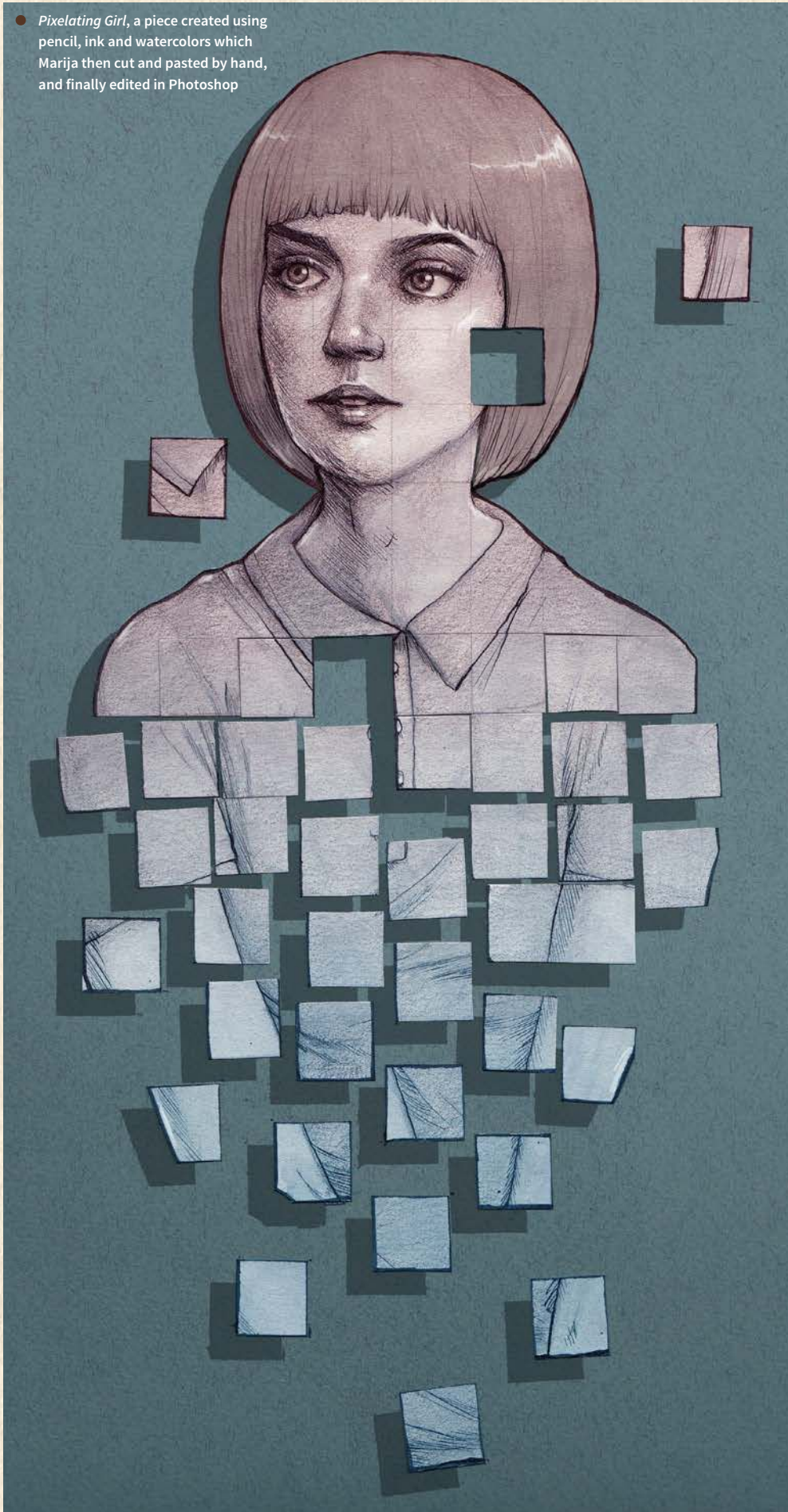
- Marija has also experimented with drawing onto wood



- Marija recommends getting the best quality paper you can for watercolor painting



- *Pixelating Girl*, a piece created using pencil, ink and watercolors which Marija then cut and pasted by hand, and finally edited in Photoshop



Sketching techniques

I think that I prefer watercolor painting and ink drawing the most. The only tip I would give is to use the best materials and paper you can get (especially when it comes to watercolor). That influences the result a lot. There are times during the sketching process when you are about to give up as you feel it is not going anywhere. It's very important to keep going and push it to the very end; you never know what comes out as a result, and practice will be always worth the time.

I had a couple of years back in high school when I went to evening art academy classes where we covered composition, classical drawing and painting techniques as well as some design and art history. I must say that 'education' like that is always beneficial but is not a key point that guarantees success in the future.

I think I would like to continue developing my drawing skills, while also growing in scale (more large works, and murals and so on). Oil and acrylic painting is on my list too, but I think that will be a form of meditation for my older self rather than a profitable activity. ●



● An illustration using watercolor paints, ink, colored pencil and light markers which was finished off digitally



● Origami features in several of Marija's works

2dartist

Would you like to see your sketches featured in 2dartist magazine?

We're always on the lookout for talented artists
and their artwork to adorn the pages of our
magazine. If you think you have what it takes,
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To submit, simply email Annie at
annie@3dtotal.com with a selection of your
images or a link to your portfolio online, plus a
little information about you.

We look forward to hearing from you!



Need inspiration for a fun project this month?

2dartist is starting a regular reader's challenge where you could win a 3dtotal shop voucher worth £60 and see your work featured in our magazine. Challenge yourself to create an artwork based on the mini-brief below and submit your creation and contact details to 2dchallenge@3dtotal.com with the title 'Challenge gallery' by 22nd January 2016 to be in with a chance of winning!

Mini-Brief: Paint a vibrant scene depicting Chinese New Year celebrations (Remember, your work should be original and not use fan art).

Art Gallery

Each issue the 2dartist team selects 10 of the best digital images from around the world. Enjoy!

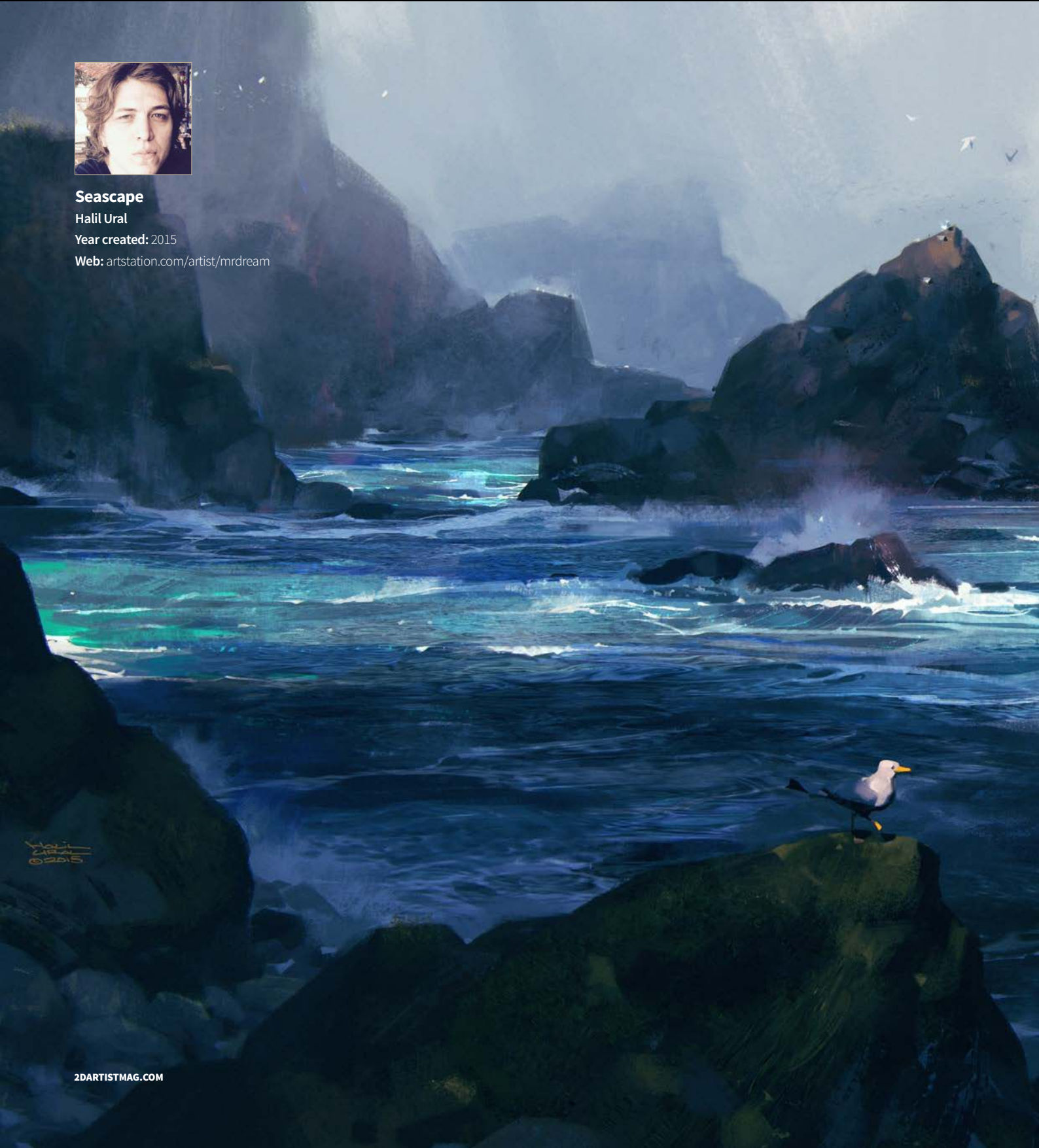


Seascape

Halil Ural

Year created: 2015

Web: artstation.com/artist/mrdream



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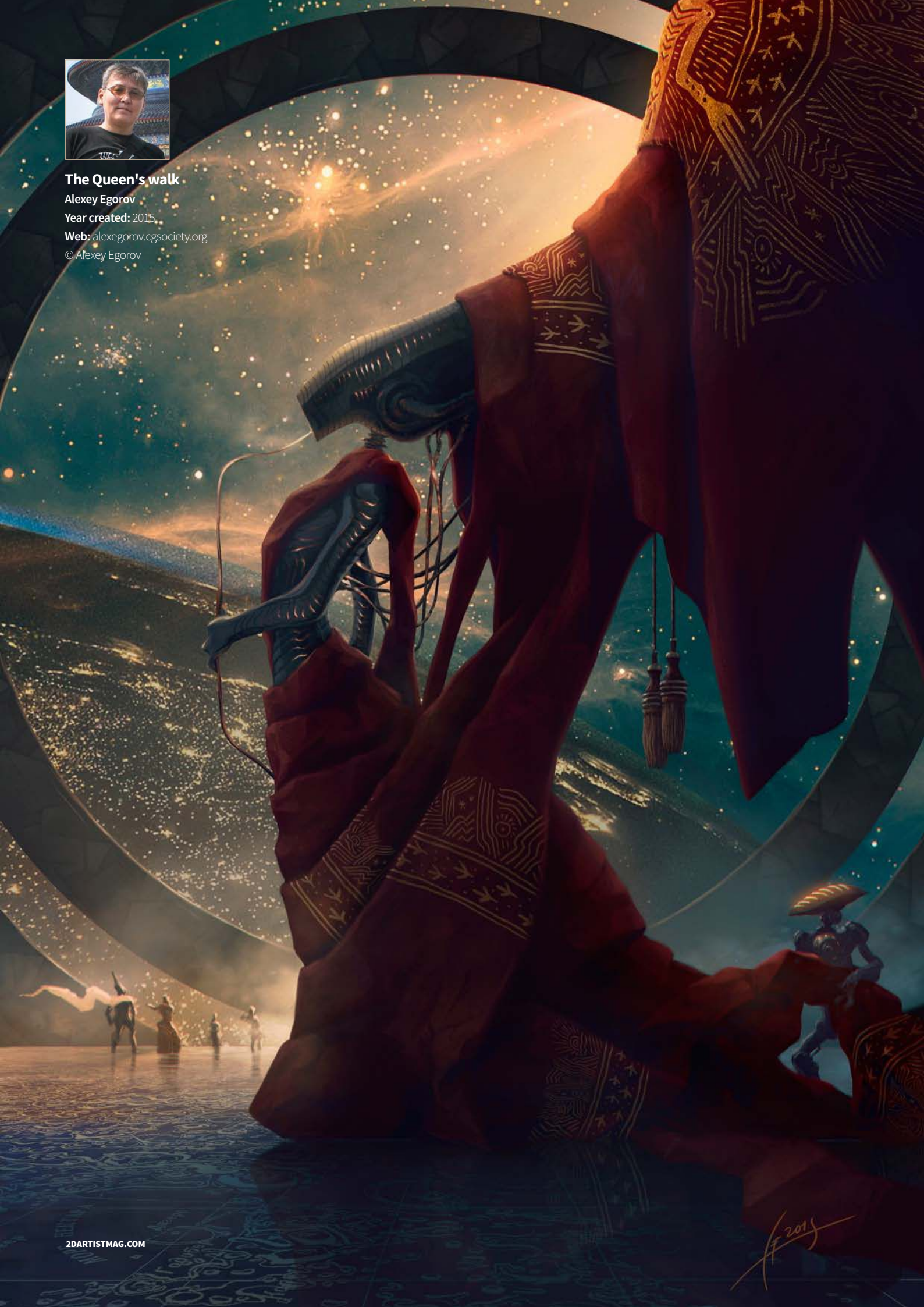
The Queen's walk

Alexey Egorov

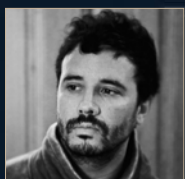
Year created: 2015

Web: alexegorov.cgsociety.org

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7/2015



**Barcelona Smoke &
Neons: The End**

Guillem H. Pongiluppi

Year created: 2015

Web: guillemhp.com



American Bison

Fogarasi Hunor

Year created: 2015

Web: facebook.com/fogarasi.hunor

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Abandoned trains

José Julián Londoño Calle

Year created: 2015

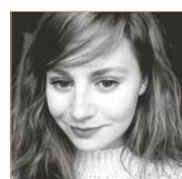
Web: artstation.com/artist/handsdigitalstudio







Magdalena



Sanya

Magdalena Dianova

Year created: 2015

Web: magdalena.artstation.com



Honey

Pham Tung Quan

Year created: 2014

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Sub-Human

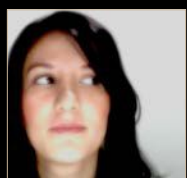
Tristan Rettich (worn pixel studio)

Year created: 2015

Web: tristanrettich.com



worn pixel studio
www.tristanrettich.com



Violetea

Sandra Posada

Year created: 2015

Web: artstation.com/artist/sandraposada944

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SANDRA_POSADA





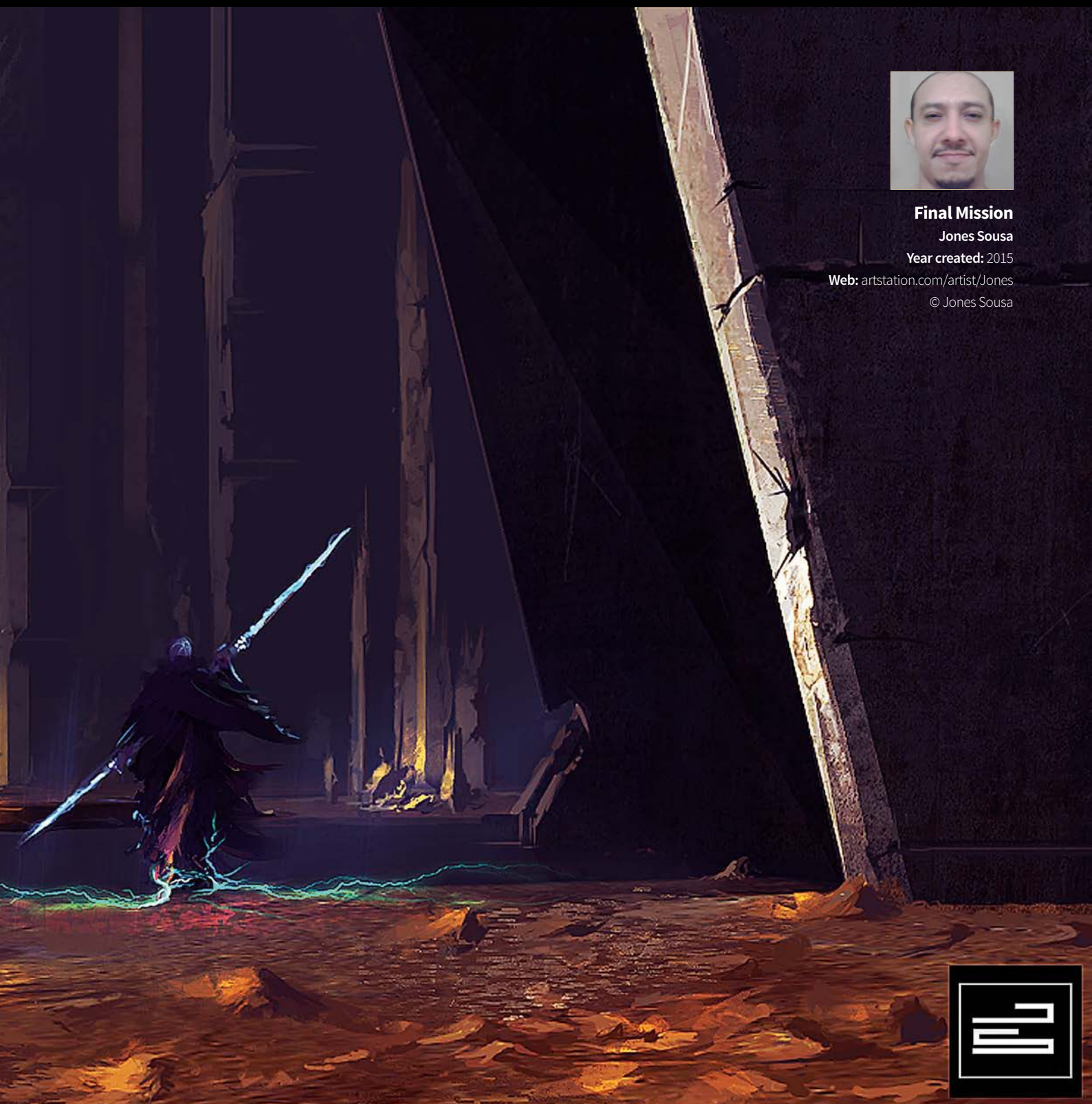
Final Mission

Jones Sousa

Year created: 2015

Web: artstation.com/artist/Jones

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The Artist



Wadim Kashin


artstation.com/artist/septicwd

Software Used:

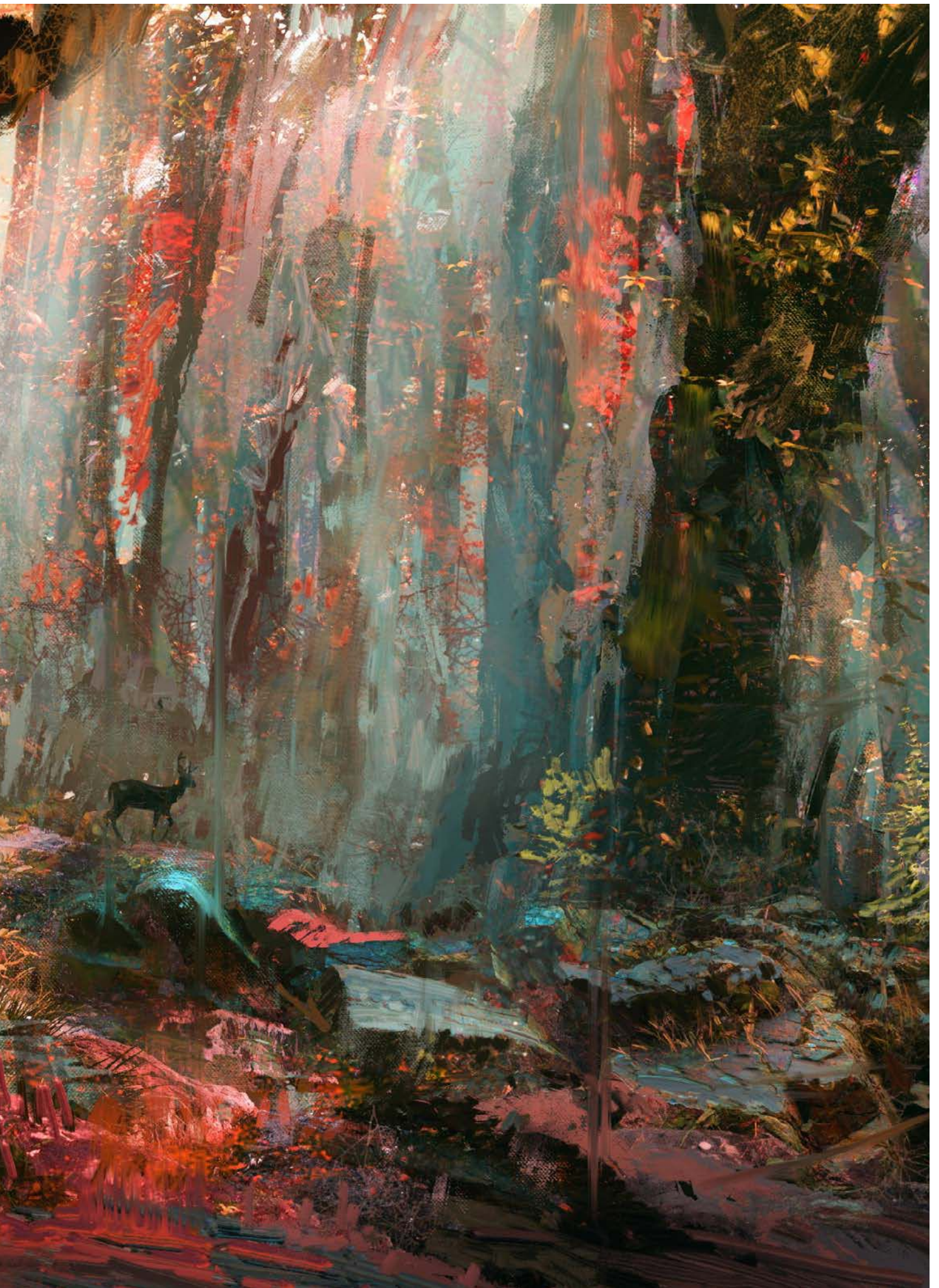
Photoshop

Wadim Kashin is a self-taught artist based in Moscow, Russia. Interested in art from a young age, Wadim started drawing seriously in 2008 and now works as a freelance artist.

Paint like the Impressionists

Wadim Kashin shows how to use vibrating strokes to recreate the painting style of the traditional art masters of Impressionism in Photoshop 



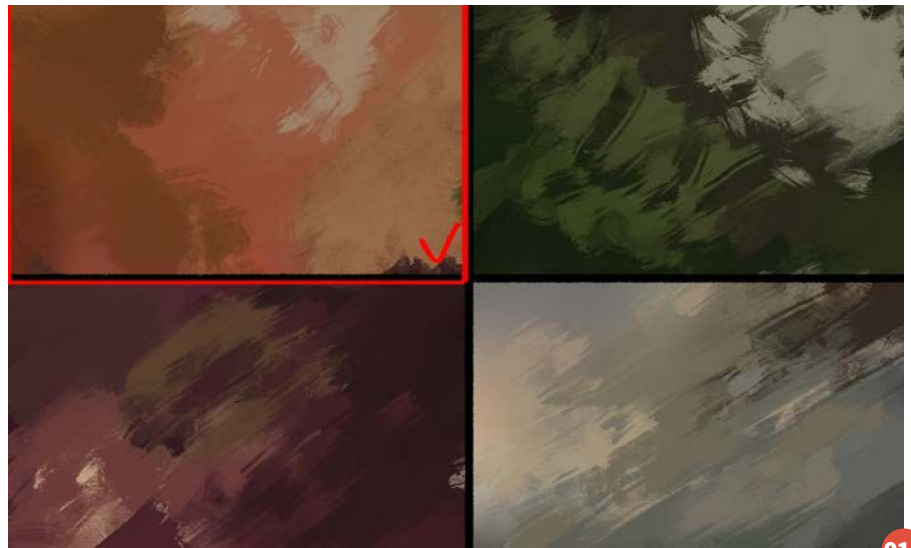


Develop your painting techniques with Wadim's *Breathing of the Forest...*

Hello to all! In this lesson I would like to tell and show you the process of creating a digital illustration in the style of the Impressionists. One of my main ideas was to show an atmosphere of the changeability of the world in the flow of time, and similarly to use as many bright and juicy colors as possible. The basis and main purpose of this lesson for me is to imitate great Impressionist artists such as Claude Monet, Edgar Degas and William Merritt Chase. Using methods and theories of color I will try to show the spirit of Impressionism by means of modern technologies.

All my work is created in stages. On every stage I will tell what instruments and methods I use, what needs attention paid to it, and how to give the work some charm. I will discuss the method of vibrating strokes, about the mixing of color, and about the functions of tools. In this process an emphasis will be given to abstraction and abstract thought.

01 Find an idea: During work on this illustration I will stick to bases and methods similar to those of the Impressionist masters such as Monet and Degas. In the search for an idea I get inspired by such moments from life as a sunny day in a forest and the atmosphere

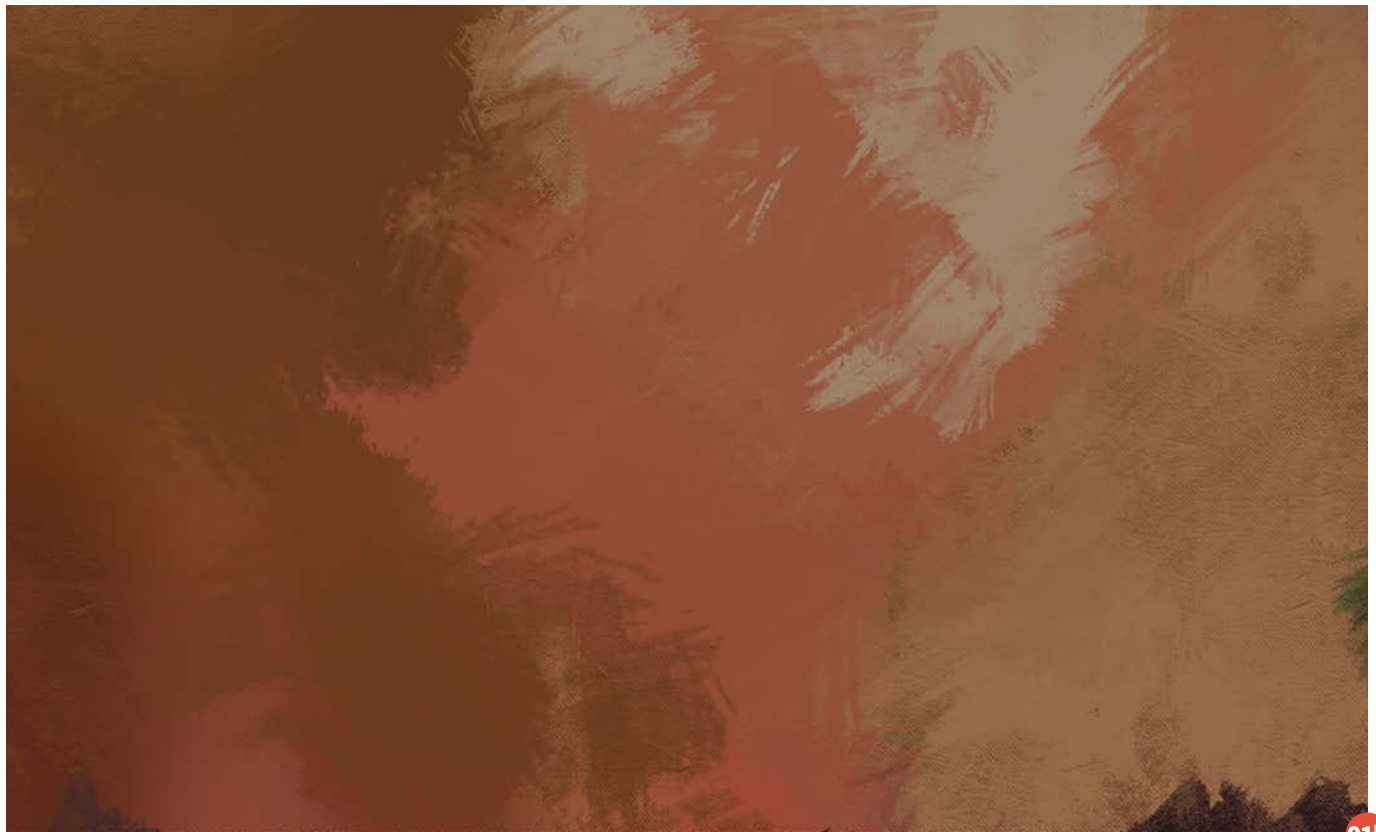


it creates. One of the main ideas is the obligatory presence of bright and juicy colors to create an interesting illumination in the piece for the viewer, and similarly to try to perfectly replicate the spirit of Impressionism by means of digital art.

One of the main differences between Impressionism and other classic styles and directions of art is its abandonment from contours and black color. Beginning with the creation of rapid colored sketches, I search for interesting variations of the general color gamut. Being based on the idea of the presence of bright and vibrant colors I choose colors such as pink, yellow, orange and green. I create sketches in the

standard Photoshop profile sRGB racemes-2.1 using the Textures option.

02 Vibration strokes: One important distinguishing feature of the Impressionist artists' style, besides the abandonment of contours, was the abandonment of the classic methods of creating brushstrokes. Instead of this, the Impressionist masters used chaotic divides in their strokes. Such strokes helped these artists to create some vibration in their works, which creates a feeling of the world's changeability in the imprinted moment. At the creation of works I often do a slope on this method by causing off strokes.





02a



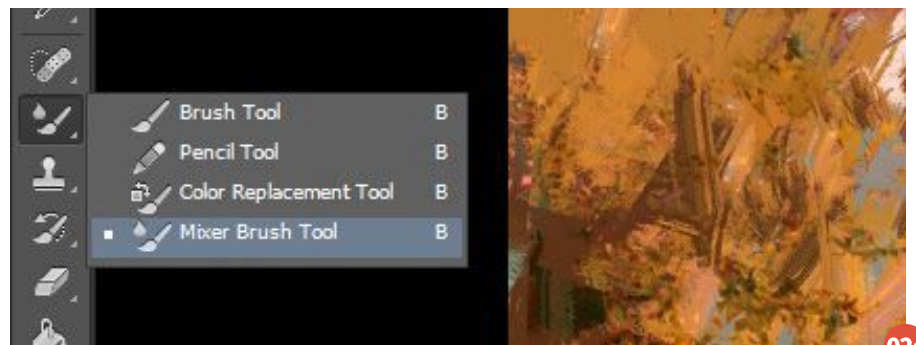
02b

Now I have a sketch that I like, I take this for a basis of my artwork and begin to inflict the first strokes which help me to find an interesting composition. I create all this chaos at this stage with the help of the Mixer Brush tool with the Dry option chosen.

At this stage the main detail that I focus my attention on is the combining of strokes and colors. The mixing of such colors as orange and yellow will give me the general background sense of heat, and the mixture of green, red and blue will help me to create a general depth for all of the illustration.

03 New details: In the process of creating illustrations I always try to focus in on some areas of the works. Such details I usually distinguish with a bright color or by working deeper into that area. Because the basic idea is of a forest and a moment of changeability in the stream of time, I begin to create the first details of foliage, stones in the foreground and the barrels of trees in the background. For these actions I applied two or three types of brushes that are in the standard set of Photoshop.

I want to mark that for practically every new combination of strokes I create a separate ▶



02c

PRO TIP Vibrant strokes

I use the method of causing vibrating strokes very often. This action can help to give special dynamics to work and can attain a very interesting effect.

First use ordinary brushes. Make hand motions up and down creating easy feather strokes. It is similarly possible to use circular motions to do this. All such strokes are inflicted chaotically and unconnected with each other.

Mixing up two or three colors, for example yellow, blue, and green, create some skeletons for future forms from the strokes. Further to this you can use the Mixer Brush tool set to Dry and repeat the procedure only doing accents of abstract and varying forms to suggest how they will look in the future. The variations in how the forms look will depend on the locations of the strokes that you make.



01a Create a series of rapid color sketches to find interesting color variations

01b The preferred color sketch can then be used as a base for your artwork

02a Quick, sloped strokes of color replicate the chaos of paint strokes used by the Impressionists

02b The use of orange and yellow hues gives a sense of heat to the background

02c Use the Mixer Brush tool with the Dry option to increase the look of chaos

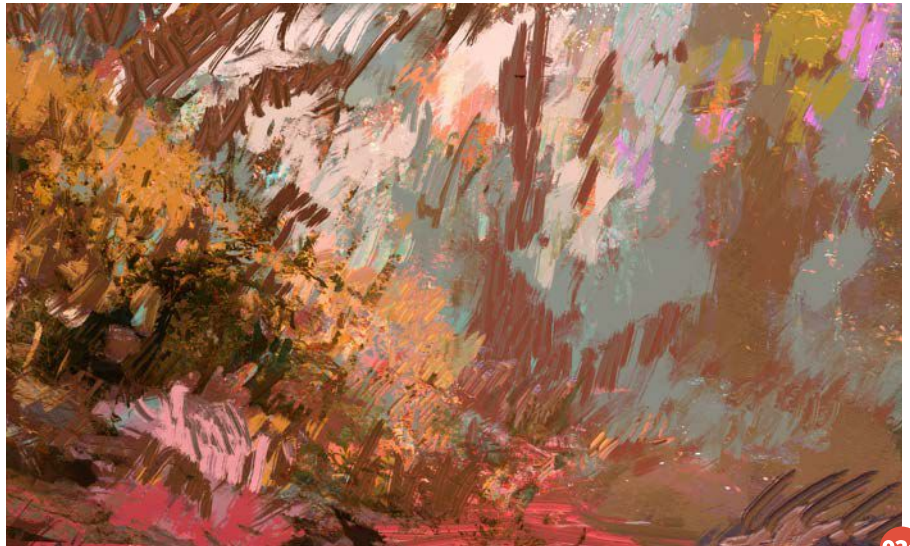
layer. This method helps me to make adjustments later as chance does not always offer the best results (for example, I can wipe away an unnecessary element). Similarly, creating on separate layers is very good for saving time in the future; for example, it is possible to copy one of the layers and use this in other areas of the work, only correcting it with Levels, Color Balance, and Transform options.

In parallel with the addition of new details I do not forget to correct the general contrast of all the work. As I already said one of the main features of Impressionism is the abandonment from black contours, therefore all emphasis goes to the mixing of colors. Thus at the creation of every new form or detail I use at least two or three different colors.

Speaking of working out in detail and the addition of new elements in the work, I also use textures sometimes. Taking a photo of the forest, I cut out an element that feels necessary to me in the piece and in the layer modes adjust the Lighten and Darken settings. I apply this to the work.

04 Focus on more details: After working and adjusting the first details I again go back to the search for the composition. The search for a more interesting variation passes in two stages for me.

First I transform all that I did already. I unite all the layers into one with Flatten Image, then I



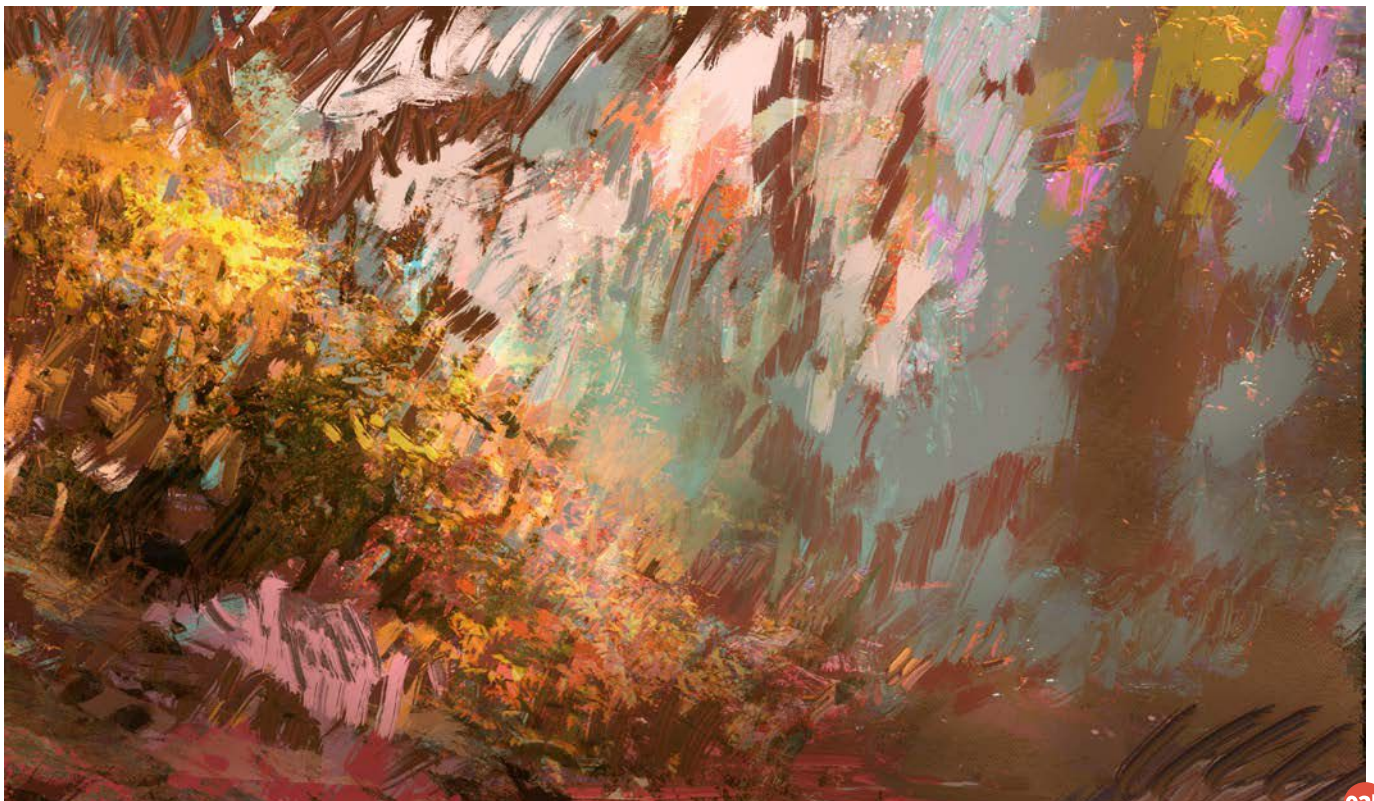
03a

create a copy of the basic background and apply Transform with the options Skew and Warp. I try to remedy the prospect of all the work looking the same and foreshortened, so that it is more interesting. It is important to remember that to create an Impressionist style you need to keep working and constantly love what you do.

The second stage of this addition of new forms and details is to create a new layer and add more details on the front and back planes. On some of these layers I use the Transform tool which helps to expose new combinations of strokes to me to make a more interesting corner. In the middle distance, I make the focus of all the work. I decide to add the silhouette of a young deer there. If I

create a landscape I always try to add silhouettes to them, be it animals or people. Such figures always give work additional volume and what's more they create some narrative. In this case the silhouette of a young deer will help in the creation of an interesting focus for the viewer.

On the layer with the silhouette I recover a layer that I can inflict yellow with an opacity of 10% to give the effect of the silhouette moving away. After these actions I continue to work on the details, adding more detail to the earth like stones and grass on the barrels of trees and some surrounding flora. During the further working out of details I use similar combinations of ordinary brushes and the Mixer Brush tool.



03b

05 Feeling of colors: It is important not to forget that in the stages of creation of this illustration, namely those where I worked with only brushes, I use the method of vibrating strokes chaotically. Further to this I work on the adjustment of the color gamut, regulating such parameters as Color Balance, Curves and Levels.

In some works I create a separate layer and add out different colors. For this image I apply to the new layer the Lighten or Overlay modes helping to determine where color tone needs to be strengthened. These manipulations help to create a depth of color that pleases me. Similarly, I do

not forget to correct the light and dark areas of the work through such instruments as the Burn or Dodge tool with Exposure set to 10%-15%.

06 Texture fragments and brush works: For the execution of this illustration I use mainly ordinary brushes and similar instruments such as the Mixer Brush tool. Now I will pass directly to the addition of textures in some areas of illustration.

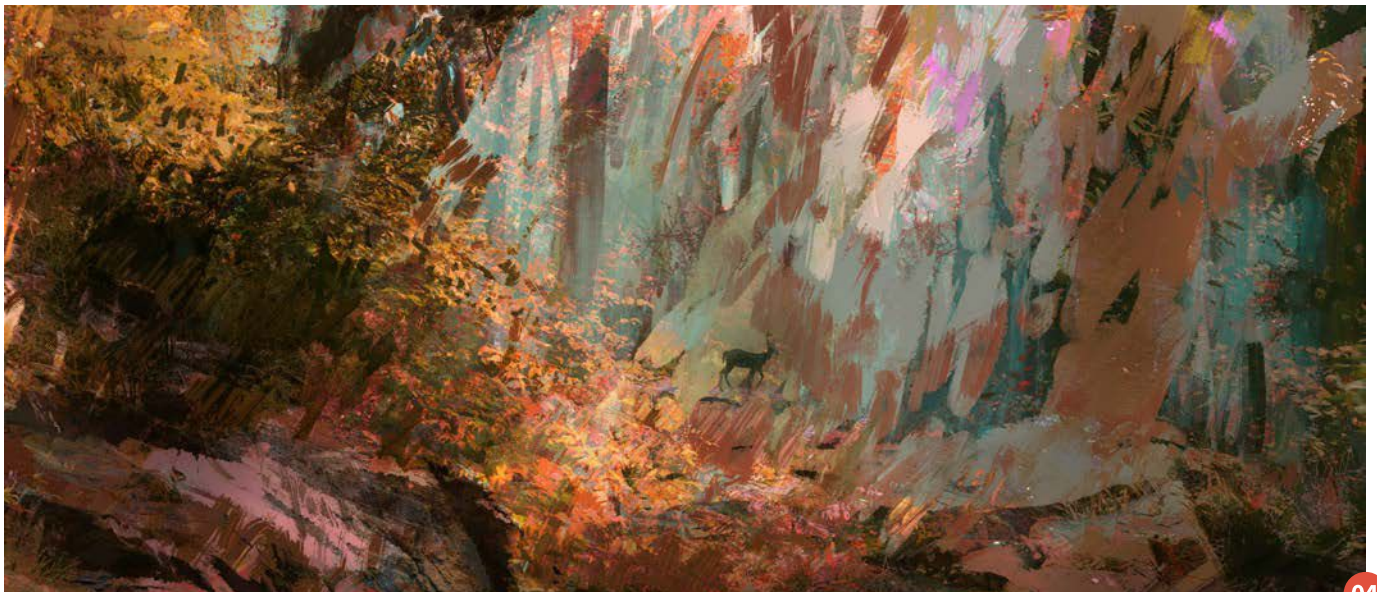
I use two or three photos of the forest and stones in this image. Because photos can differ in light and dark tones on a color palette, to every photo ►

03a Start adding details to the scene to make a more interesting composition. Use a photo texture if necessary

03b As Impressionist art doesn't use black contours, definition has to be built up using a mix of light and dark tones

04 Add a silhouette to provide a point of focus in the middle distance

05 Use tools such as Dodge and Burn to strengthen areas of light and dark





I apply the actions: Image > Adjustments > Match Color and choose for each photo the source for a color gamut. I only correct the Fade parameter proposing values with limits from 0 to 25. I try to do the same to every such photo to keep the color identical with my illustration. I also cut out the piece of photo that seems necessary to me and using the modes Lighten, Darken or Overlay,

I apply the textures to the necessary areas of the work. All such areas that are exposed to the textures I correct with the help of the Mixer Brush tool using Dry or Wet. In this situation I am helped more by a variant with a Wet setting. This function perfectly washes out and gives greater artistry to some elements of work. When I add textures to my work, I use this method often. It helps me

to do these textures a bit washed out, but at the same time improving the transitions from detail to detail.

In parallel with the addition of textures I add more details with brushes, regulating the levels and opacity if necessary. On the whole during all the process of creation I use usually five or six types

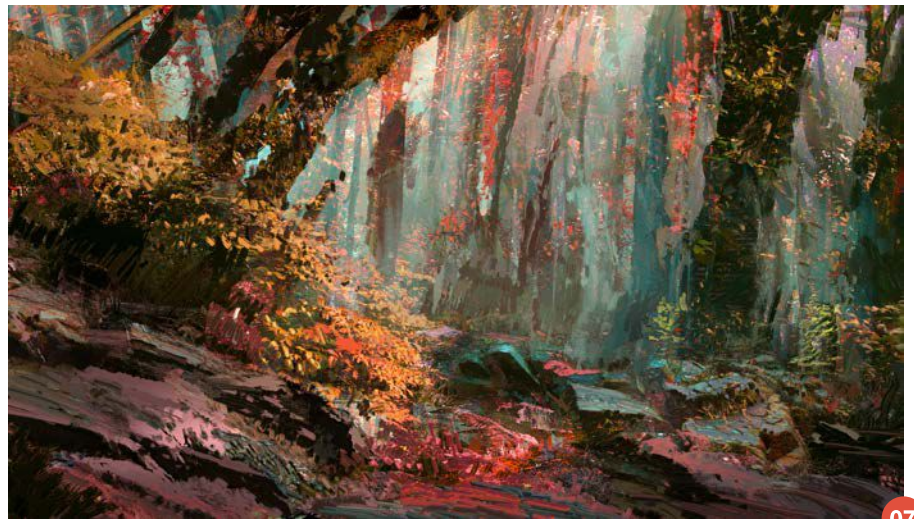
of brushes. After working with the textures I again unite everything in one layer and easily adjust the image using the Burn or Dodge tool. Also I will stylize the work using some of the above effect.

07 Stylization: After the basic process of drawing, and addition of textures, I start to work on the illumination of the image and dark to light tones. I try to add this special effect to practically all my illustrations.

The essence of this effect consists of a simulation of the traditional painting effects using graphic work. On some areas of work, for example there is a smooth transition from dark tone to light tones. To this image I add new strokes on the edges of some forms with the Mixer Brush tool, with the Wet option chosen.

This method helps me to add to the work yet more effects of vibration and changeability in the environment. Such effects replicate the methods of adjustment used in works of traditional art.

It is important to remember that such strokes should be made on a new separate layer. If I don't like how some strokes are arranged I correct them with a rubber. Similarly for adjusting such effects I sometimes copy a layer with the already prepared strokes and carry this copy in to other areas of the illustration, regulating the parameters with only Opacity or Flow. I continue to add more strokes to increase the stylization.



07

08 Final color correction: On the last step of creating this illustration I work only on the adjustment of colors and tones. In this case I use Color Balance, Levels and Curves and in parallel with these actions I use the Burn tool and the Dodge tool.

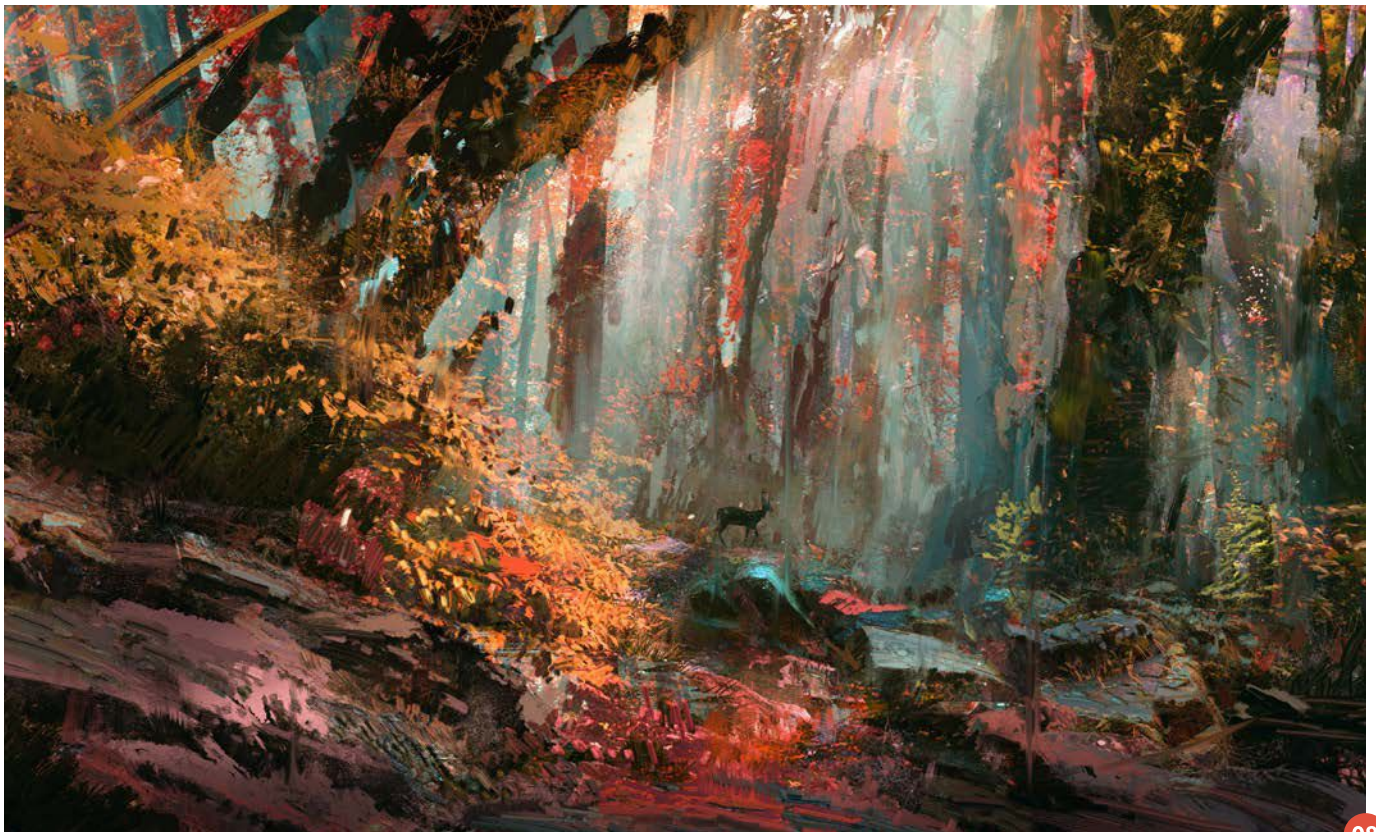
Sometimes on the last stages of the creation of a work, I experiment with focusing the front and middle planes through the Blur tool, but here I decided not to use these. Instead, I spared more attention to editing with Match Color > Color Intensity, and brought in some easy changes using Exposure to supersaturate the work by using contrast and make some of the tones softer and smoother. ●

06a Use photo textures to add details to sections of the image

06b Blend these textures into the image and use more brushstrokes to add some further detail

07 The image now has a lot more interest and depth but keeps the Impressionist style

08 Now we have the final image!



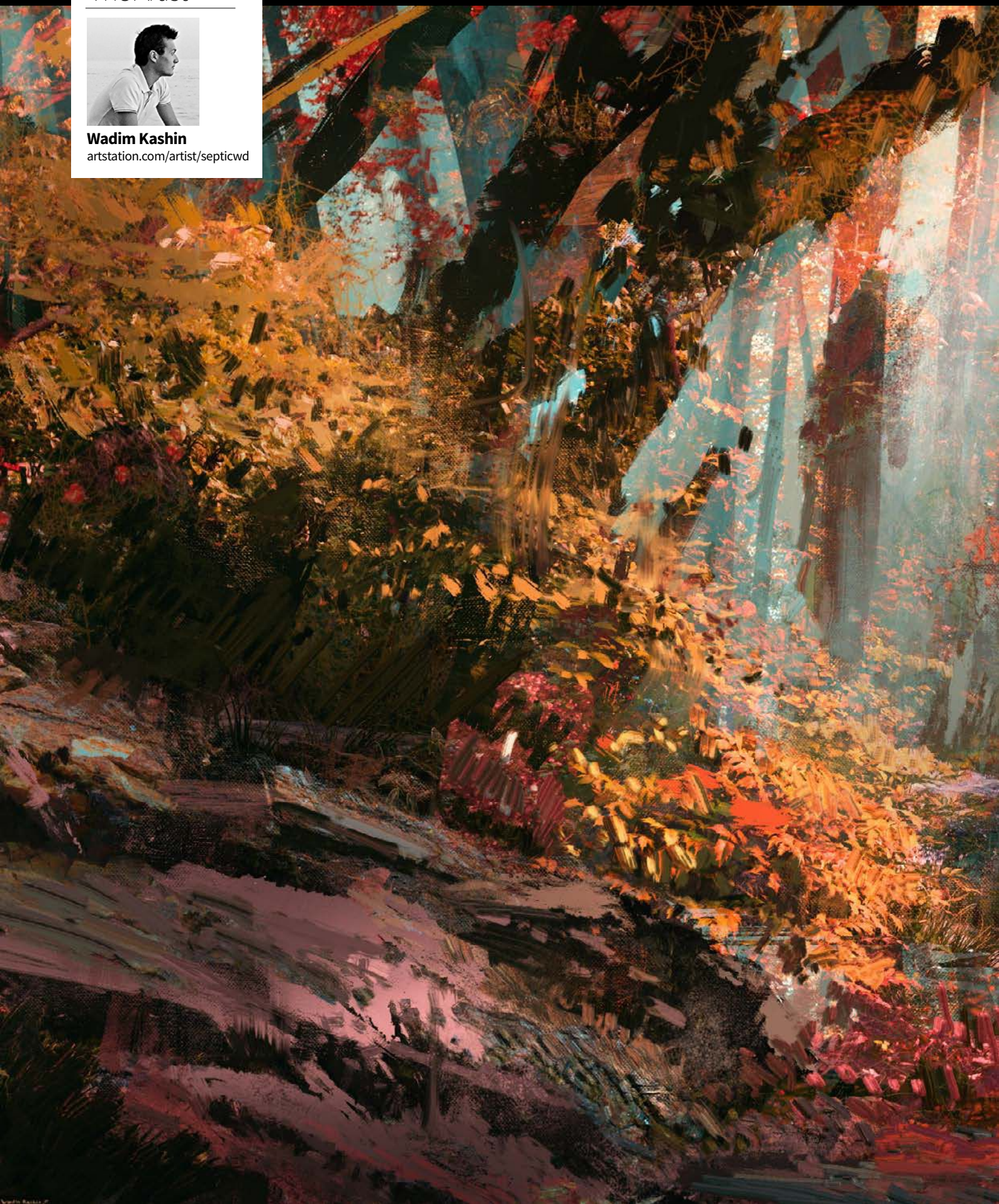
08

The Artist



Wadim Kashin

artstation.com/artist/septicwd





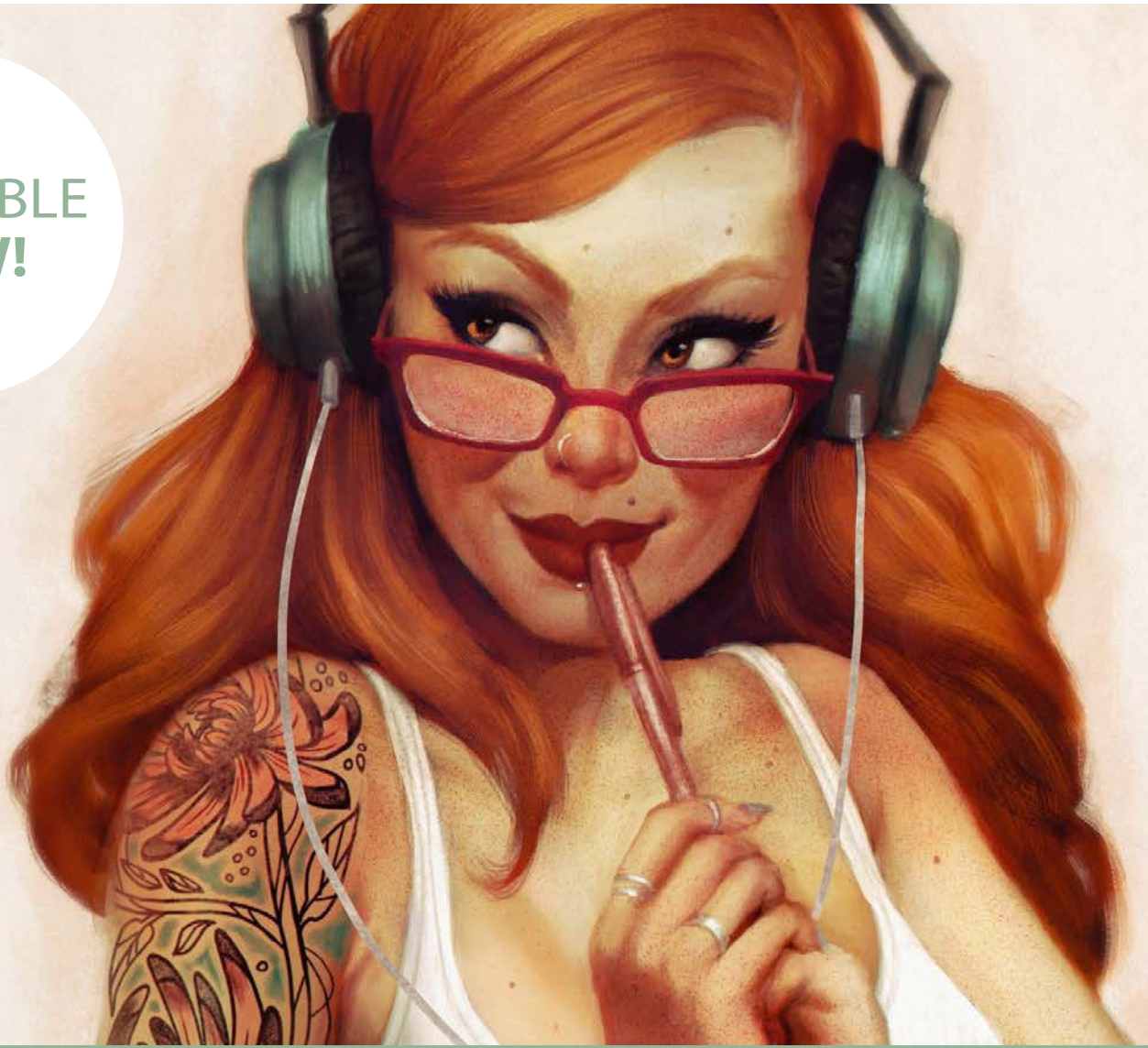
**Do you struggle to get over a
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2dartist will be running a new feature in 2016 where professional artists will give advice on your creative problems. If you have a creative area you would like help to improve on, get in touch!

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The Artist



Christoph Peters

trejoeeee.deviantart.com

Software Used:

Photoshop

Christoph Peters is a freelance concept artist living in Chile. He creates illustrations for games, graphic novels and books, specializing in fantasy illustrations with an emphasis on color and light.



Paint light and color

Christoph Peters demonstrates how to use light and color effects in a fantasy scene ▶

Get tips on how to create an atmospheric scene...

Over the course of this tutorial you will see how you can simply master the properties of painting light and color in Photoshop to create a lustrous fantasy scene. By creating a striking character in a throne setting you can explore how these elements affect drama and emotion in fantasy art.

01 **Sketches:** To start I always make a couple of sketches to get a better idea

of what I want to portray in the illustration or concept I'm making.

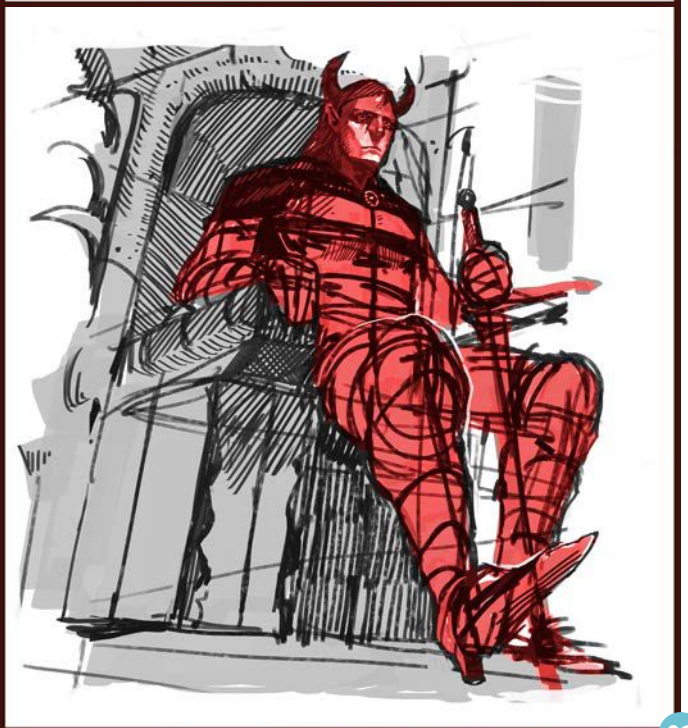
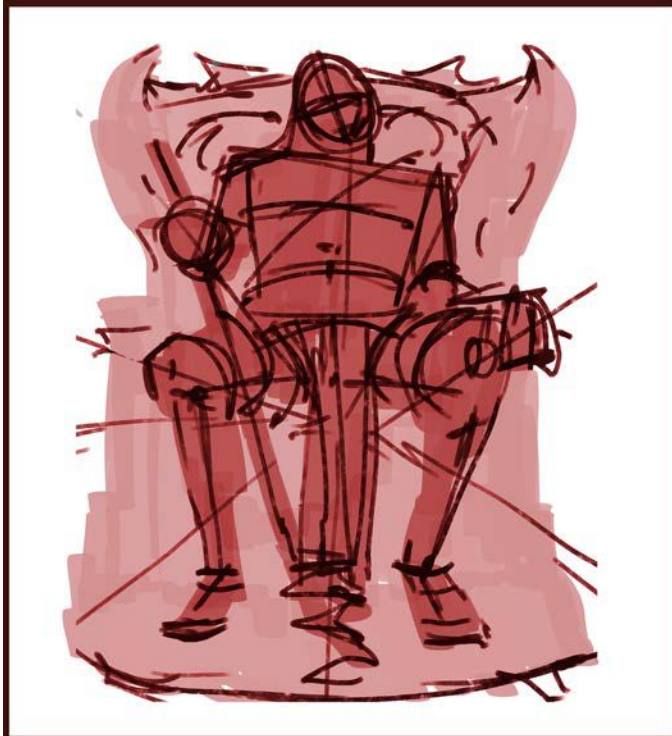
At this stage I don't have a clear idea of what the final piece will look like and usually this process is an experimental journey which I enjoy a lot. For this process I use some large textured brushes that are really useful to make quick rough sketches. You don't need to work on the details now, just draw roughly to get a quick approach.

For this tutorial I really want to change the common impression of 'the bad guy on the

throne'. I want to make my character look fresh and mystical, avoiding that rude or renegade look we usually see in films and videogames.

To achieve this result, I focus myself only on drawing the opposite of that whole common concept of what the guy on the throne looks like. I decide to draw a young guy with a reclined and relaxed pose, but always keeping the dark feeling ▶

01 Christoph sketched out a selection of designs for a male figure on a throne



on it. I draw a few quick sketches to help me define the character.

02 **Review the sketches:** Sketches number one and two are not what I am looking for in my final illustration. These ones are viewed from a front view which makes the composition look too static and boring. Option number four is much better than number one and two, but I finally decide to work with sketch number three. I think that it has the passive feeling that I am trying to achieve, and also the camera framing has an interesting viewpoint that I like a lot.

The first thing I do now I have my sketch is put a blue layer over the sketch in Multiply mode, just to see a solid unity between the drawing and a mass of color.

03 **Lighting source:** First of all you must understand that a wide variety of light sources exist, and that there are some reactions and other complex lighting phenomenon that are almost non-reproducible for digital painters. However, you don't need to be afraid of not being able to reproduce a lighting effect in a photorealistic way. NO! We are interpreters of lighting reality. We study the light to be able to represent it in the most efficient way and emulate the function of the lighting in reality, so don't force yourself to be too photorealistic.

Keep in mind these simple concepts about lighting and light sources:

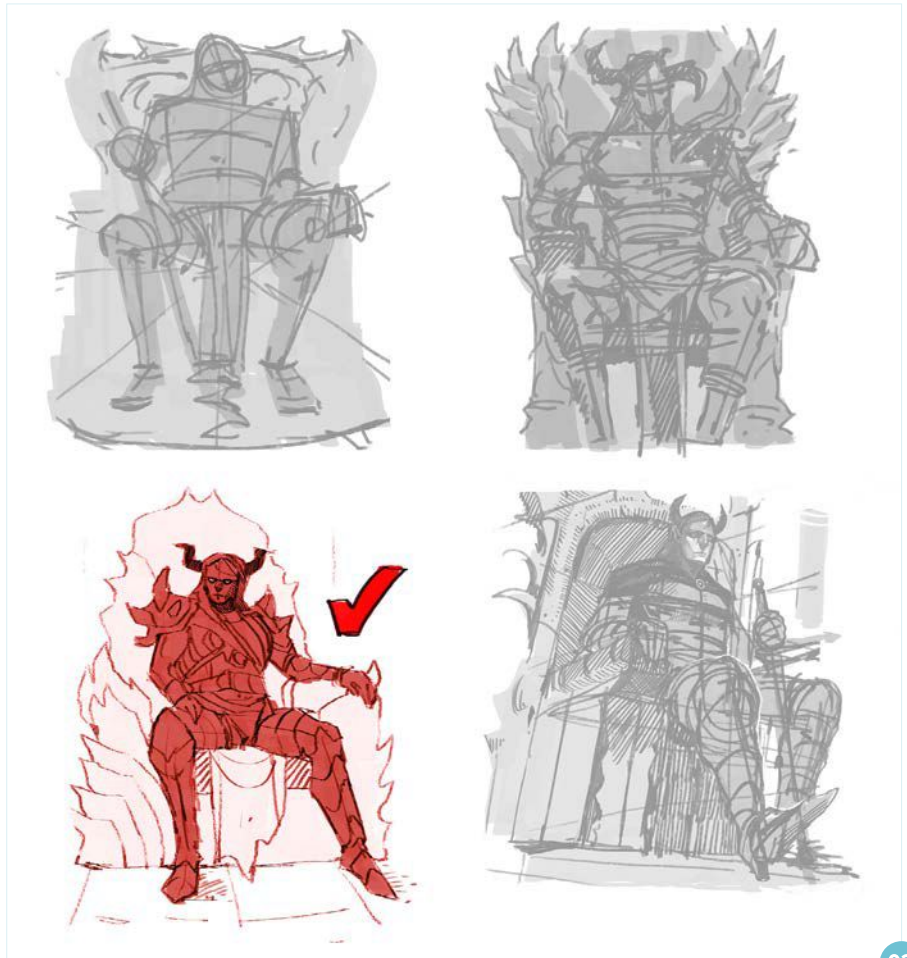
a) The main light source: this is the light source that affects all elements found in the geometric space, and it can be present in a natural or artificial way.

b) Natural light: the natural light of a scene comes directly from a natural lighting emission. For example, the light that comes from the sun or the moon provides natural light.

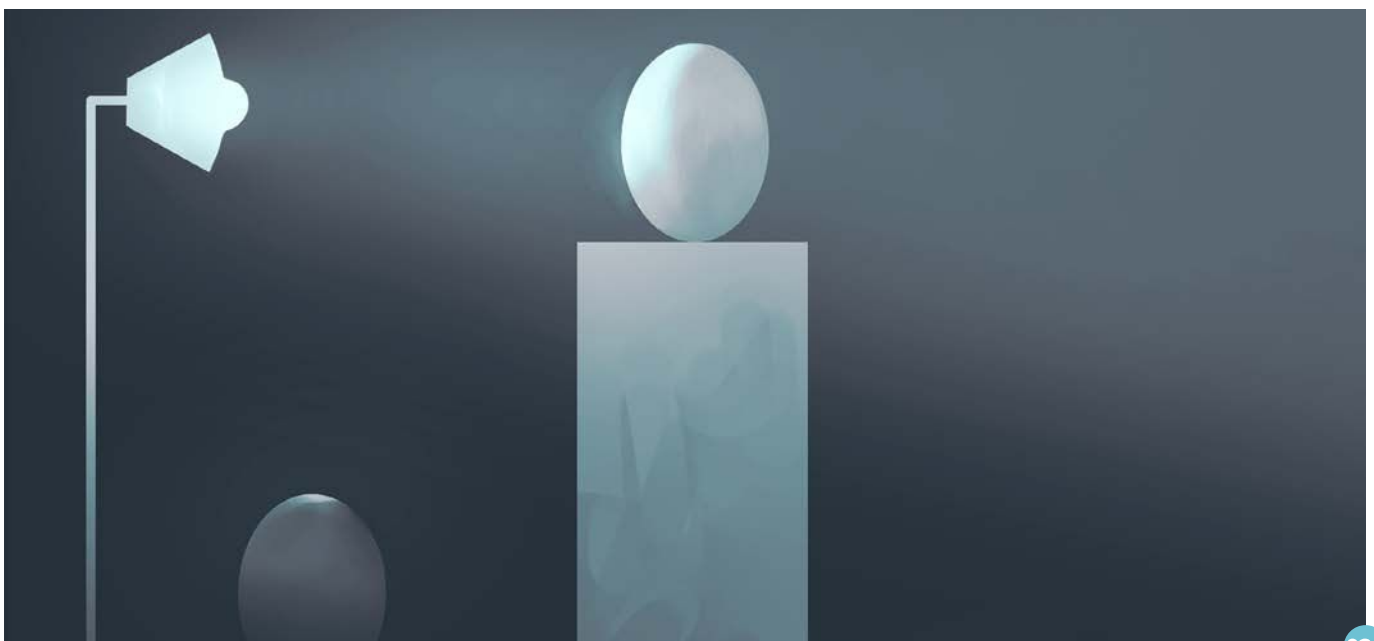
c) Artificial light: the artificial light comes from a synthetic source, which means it can be a lamp, a neon light, or flashlights, and so on.

Once you have a type of light source you need to consider the properties of that light, such as the energy and distance.

The energy of the light is the intensity at which rays are emitted from the light source. Distance is a basic property and just represents the existing distance between point A and point B, A being



02



03a



the light source and B the object and its surface. The distance also influences the force of the light energy. It is understood that at a greater distance, the illumination on an object will decrease.

We can conclude that not only does the linear distance determines the light intensity that the objects receive, the height and the position that

the object possesses in relation to the light source will determine its light exposure as well.

In this case, I place the light source to the left side of the illustration composition. I also decide that a cold light coming from a non-existent (for the viewer) source would give the illustration an interesting atmosphere of mystery. ►

02 Compare the sketches and pick the image which you find most interesting

03a Here you can see how the effect of light differs depending on the distance between the light source and the object

03b For this image the light source comes from the top-left corner

03b

04 **Choosing colors:** I think that almost every artist has their own process of choosing colors when painting an illustration. Some artists choose colors influenced by personal tastes, while others choose color influenced by their daily mood, and others make a more detailed study, playing with various factors such as the concept idea, character, and environment, and so on. Personally, I have an uncommon taste for gray tones and limited color palettes, which usually gives me good results.

The benefits of gray color palettes are that it is much easier to handle the color values and it's much easier to edit your colors if you start with an unsaturated palette. You can then apply lighting effects along the way without worrying about over saturating the colors too much. You can also create interesting atmospheres, and create more realistic environments which have a strong contrast between desaturated colors. The colors which are saturated will then have more intensity.

I choose a simple color composition for this illustration, using cold lighting in contrast to a warm palette for the shadows. The color formula will affect all the elements on the scene.

I pick up colors using the Color Picker tool in Photoshop to create the color palette. As you can tell, it is a limited color scheme but it does have some color accents on it.

05 **Rendering:** We can describe the rendering process as the final resolution that we'll apply into the digital plane. It involves painting, texturing, materials, understanding of lighting and many other factors.

It's important to order and simplify your analysis chain to render the element in a good way, otherwise we won't be able to achieve the results we want to create in the final stages. Disorder will end in frustration and a bad understanding of how the process works.

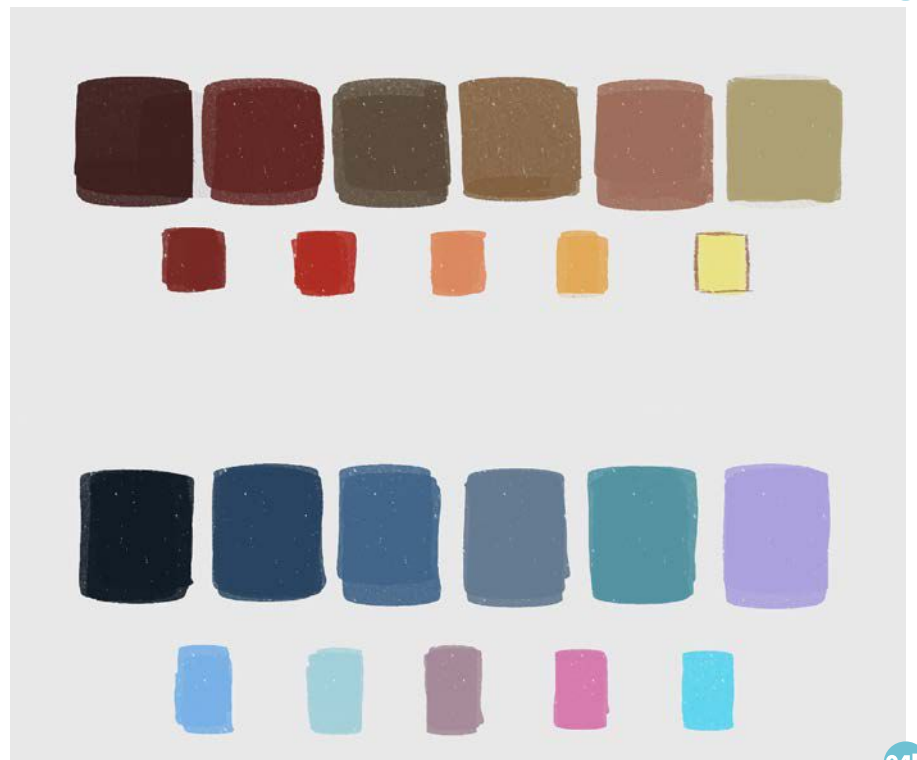
An example of a simple analysis chain is to:

- Order the space around an object in the composition.
- Define the light source.
- Secondary data which includes the light source properties (natural source, artificial source, and energy, the object's geometry, natural color (the basic color of the element) and the material and texture of the object.
- Any shadows that are cast by the objects.

While painting you need to analyze all these factors to understand how the rendering works.



04a



04b



05

06 **Rendering a simple volume:** Any artist has their own way to render the elements in their illustration. I find that an easy way to render an element is to make a basic shape to set the forms and basic structure of the object.

You can do this by making a selection in Photoshop and filling it with a flat color. Then you can create basic volume with soft-edge brushes, just like in figure 6. Keep the selection so you don't overcome the borders of the shape. Finally, you can add brushstrokes to create a painterly feeling, in order to paint the volume. The brushes I use to create the render here are very simple; a calligraphic textured flat brush and a simple soft-edge brush from the custom set in Photoshop.

07 **Set the atmosphere:** A way to further simplify the rendering process is to create a couple of spheres using all the colors you will need while painting the illustration. Then you can pick up the colors from the spheres and use them to paint the different volumes in the scene. This can be a great color and volume reference!

I now have a sense of the whole illustration and the very first colors I add to set the basic atmosphere. As said in the beginning of the tutorial, I choose a cold atmosphere with warm contrasting colors on its shadows. At this stage I start playing with the overall design elements such as the face, armor, hair, and little details and so on. I try to design a very simple guy with nothing too complex.

08 **Rendering the face:** The first step to rendering the face is just to use a medium brush to start painting in the large masses of color, not the details. At this stage, you can also set the simple shadows and lights. Don't get worried if everything looks like a speed painting at this point; you are just paying attention here to the overall piece, rather than any specific point. ▶

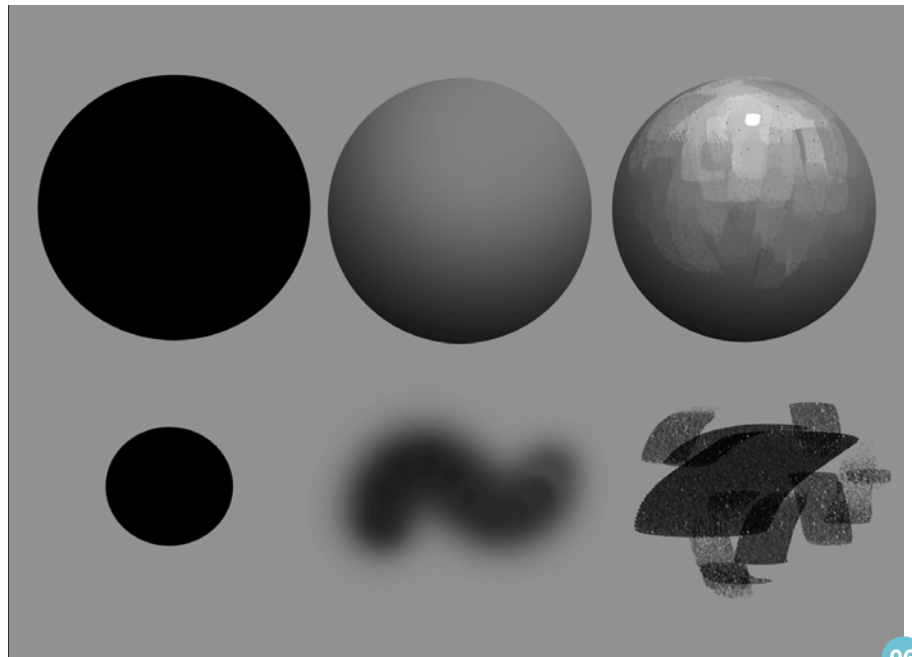
04a Shadow can be shown in color choice as well as tone

04b Use the Color Picker tool to create a color palette for your image

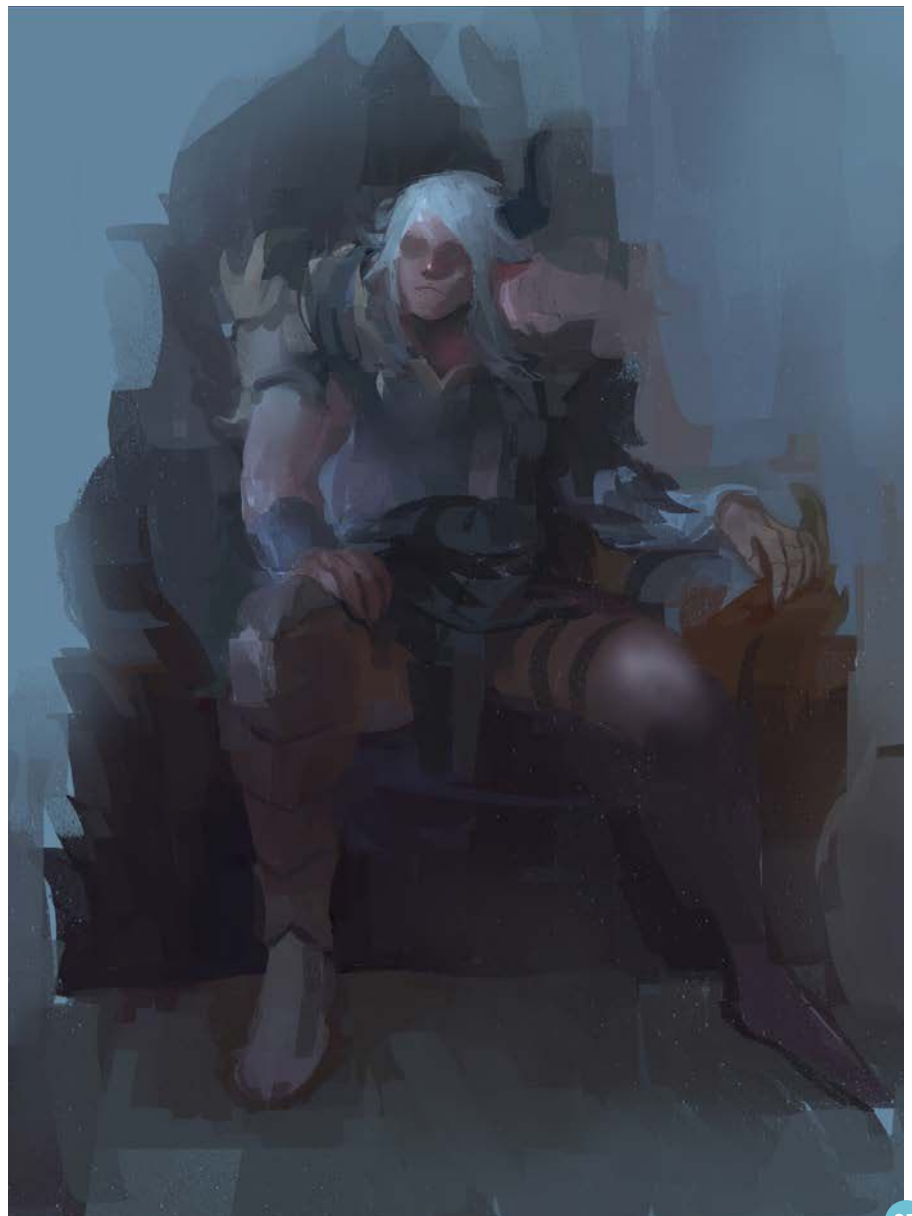
05 An analysis chain can help you fully render your objects

06 Soft-edged brushes can be used to create basic volume

07 Add atmosphere to the scene by contrasting warm and cold colors



06



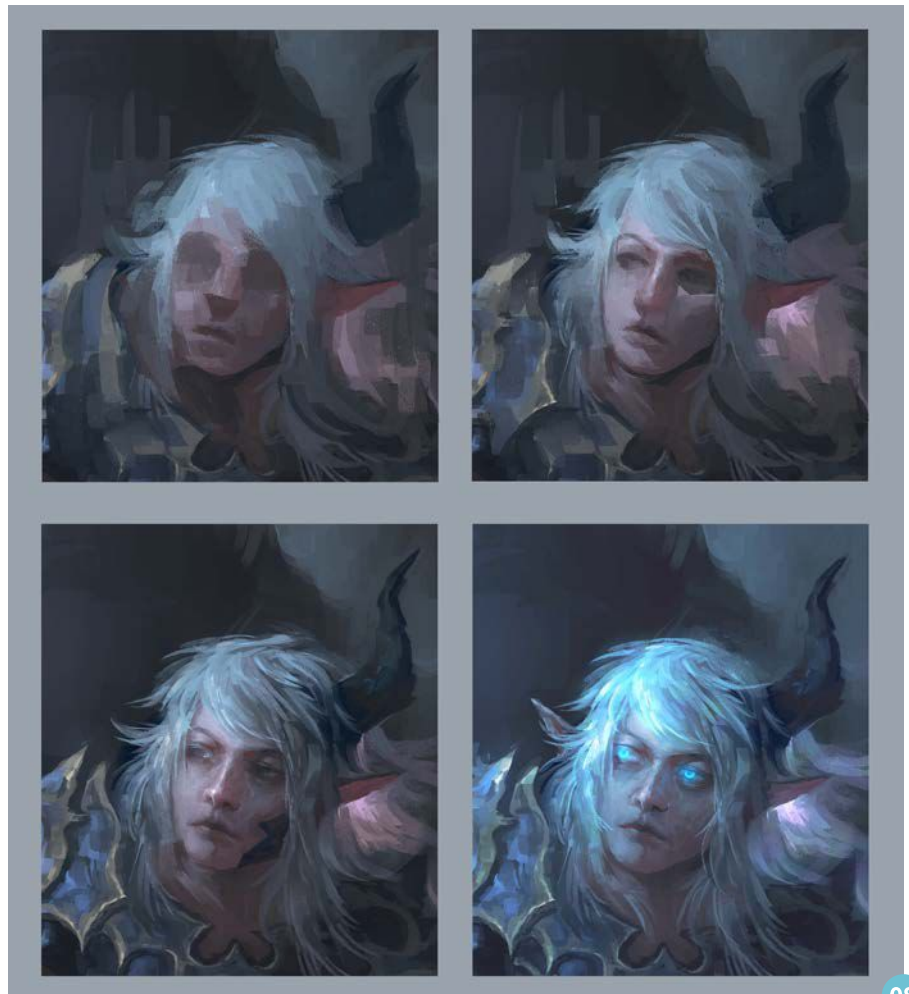
07

Now you can start going through some details, adding lighter tones and bringing to the character a sense of life and expression. This is where we start searching for the gesture which suggests the mood and the intention of the character.

Step by step you can paint new lighter colors, saturating the whole palette by adding pure colors on to specific areas. Just like the purples, pinks and blue tones I am using here. I now need to define the main aspects of the face, like the eyes, nose, mouth and hair, always taking care over the whole structure in unison.

Keep adding lighter tones and focus mainly on the little details, such as the lips, a little hair and some skin texturing. At this point, you can define the final details on the face. Use small brushes to achieve this result. If needed you can zoom-in on the canvas to see where the little details are needed easily.

It's very important to not lose the gesture of the face, so try to keep the original solidity and structure. You can use references to make a comparison between the photo and the face you are painting. Finally add some effects with Color Dodge layers. To do this, simply use a smooth custom brush from the custom set and try painting with darker tones the areas you want to light and to clarify.



08

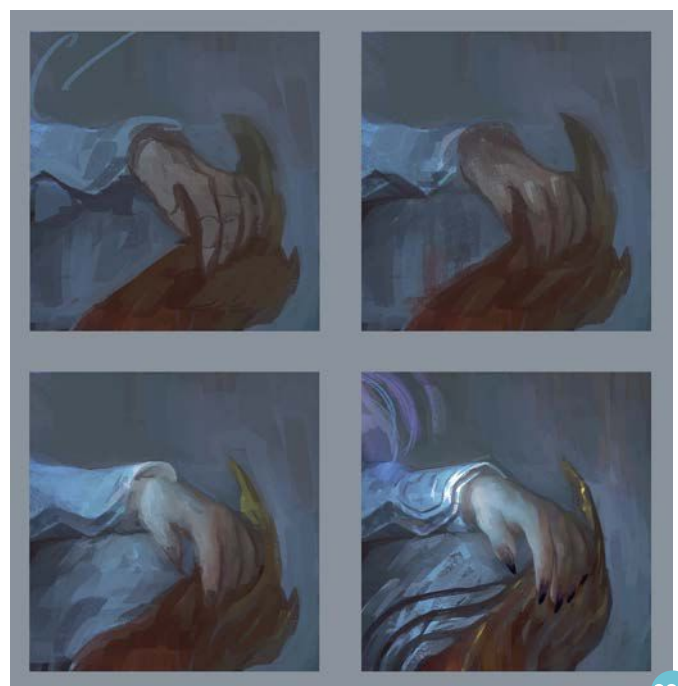
09 **Render the body:** I now repeat the previous process for the hands, legs and armor details, starting from the big masses of color and then going through details and tiny highlights on the reflective materials, such as

metal and glass. Always pay attention to what you are painting, so you don't lose the way; always have in mind the lighting source and its properties. Otherwise, you will struggle to get a solid lighting composition.

Try to change the brushes you are using to get new brushstrokes while painting, and play with the texture setting to create cool painterly effects! Remember to always start from basic forms and shapes as this will make the process a lot easier.



09a



09b

COLOR DODGE

OVERLAY



10

10 Final adjustments and effects: If you are just getting to the final stages and you feel that the image needs something refreshing, or perhaps you feel that the atmosphere you started with doesn't fit with the current image, you can make simple adjustments that could make the difference.

These days, most artists are using the famous Dodge and Overlay lighting effects. Yes, theory can be really cool, but if you don't know how to use them you can really ruin your painting, and the time you spent painting the piece could go directly to the trash.

You don't want your painting look like a complete mess right? So pay attention to these simple tips to manage the Color Dodge and Overlay lighting effect like a champion!

Color Dodge: Always control the tone and value. You don't want your painting looking like an electro party. Use dark tones to give the painting nice, soft highlights in the areas you wish to direct the viewer's eye. You should also use soft-edged brushes, or soft border selections to give the dodge effect a smooth feeling. Use mid-tones and never use saturated or pure colors to paint with dodge mode.

Overlay: This is a much simpler tool than the Dodge tool. You can play in a freer way with this layer as it has no rules, and you can just have some fun painting with random colors to see what crazy results you can produce.

11 The last touches: Finally, you can apply some final filters such as Levels, Color Balance or Curves (you can find these filters in

the image menu). For this painting I add bluish Overlay layers, with purple, green and warm dodge effects. All of these were done with a soft-edged brush. ●

08 Add lighter tones with a medium brush to detail the face

09a Repeat the rendering process with the body of your figure

09b Changing brushes during the process adds texture to the image

10 Here you can see the Dodge and Overlay color settings for each effect, and its values and tones

The Artist



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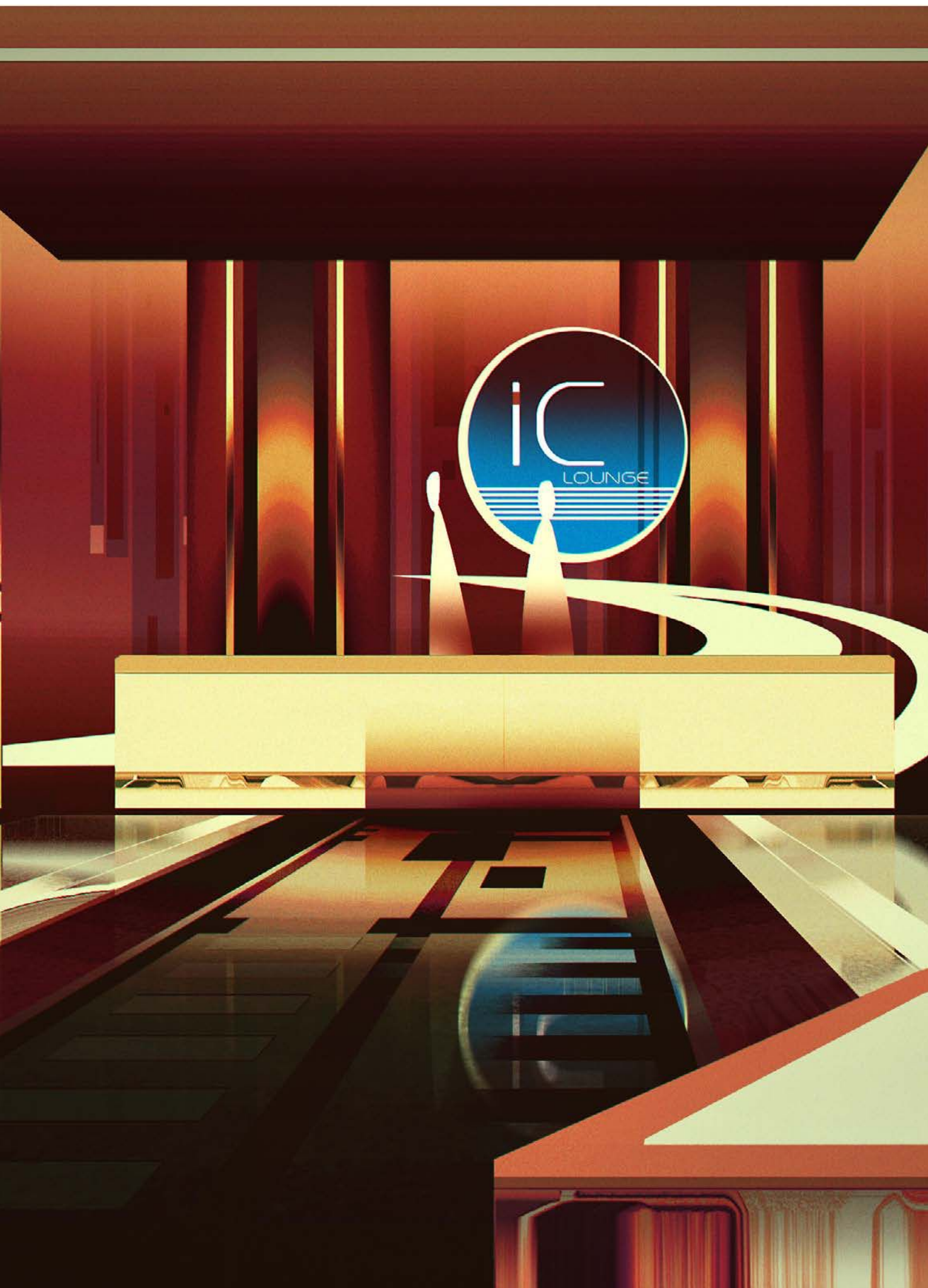
Photoshop

Ian Jun Wei Chiew is a concept artist and illustrator working in the film and gaming industry. He currently works at Sucker Punch Productions in addition to freelance work.

Create a sleek interior

Concept artist Ian Jun Wei Chiew shows us how to use shape assets and layers to quickly create a modern interior ▶





Paint a modern sci-fi interior in an hour...

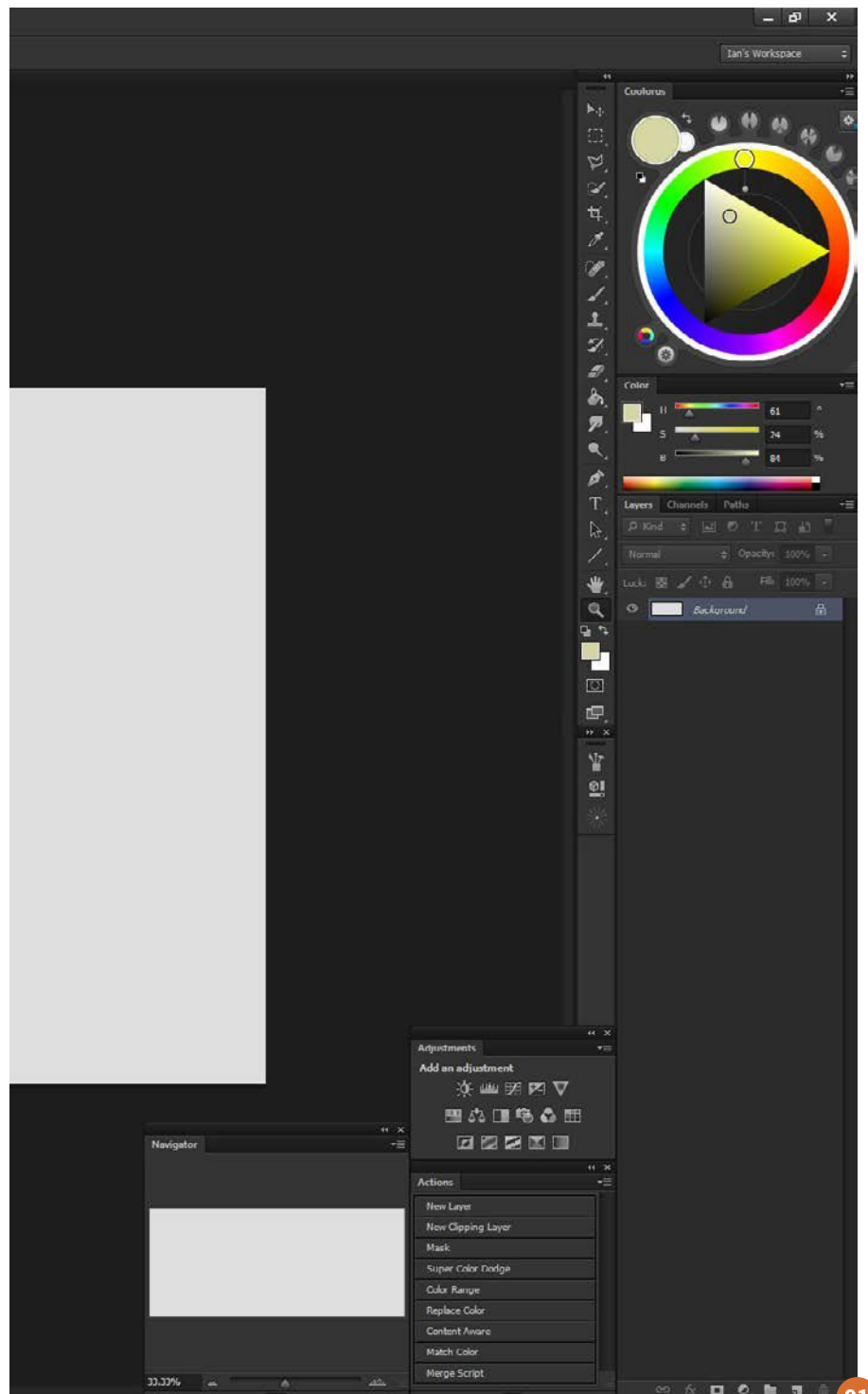
So for this one hour tutorial, I've decided to go with a modern, sci-fi theme of an interior as I'm heavily inspired by modern and contemporary architecture. In my head I don't have an exact subject except for that it could be some sort of lobby or lounge. I also want to take on a warmer color palette compared to a cold one. Once I've gotten an idea in my head somewhat, I start hunting for reference images; most of which are modern hotel lobbies and sushi bars. The reason why sushi bars are such great reference is because they usually have some wood for the counters and tables, therefore it can give me a nice warm color palette.

Once I have all my images in a folder, I compose a big image that consists of all the reference images in a collage. I always do this so that I can have all the images open in a single JPEG file that fills up my second monitor instead of having to either individually open each image or open them all with many windows. I also do some value and color adjustments on all the images so that they feel more unified and since I am going for the warmer palette. I also do some color tweaks to give me a better representation of what I want the final result to look like.

01 Setting up the interface: I have my toolbars moved from left to right just so that I can access it within the same vicinity as my layers. I use a plugin called Coolorus that gives me a nice color wheel on the top right. The Navigator is a great window to have in your interface because you always want to check and see if your image reads well in a thumbnail size, so I would occasionally take a glance at it instead of zooming in and out all the time.

I keep my layer Adjustments window at the bottom as I use it very often and prefer to have the adjustment itself on its own layer instead of having it directly applied on the layer you're working on. This is so that I can have more control with the opacity and masks of that adjustment layer and so on.

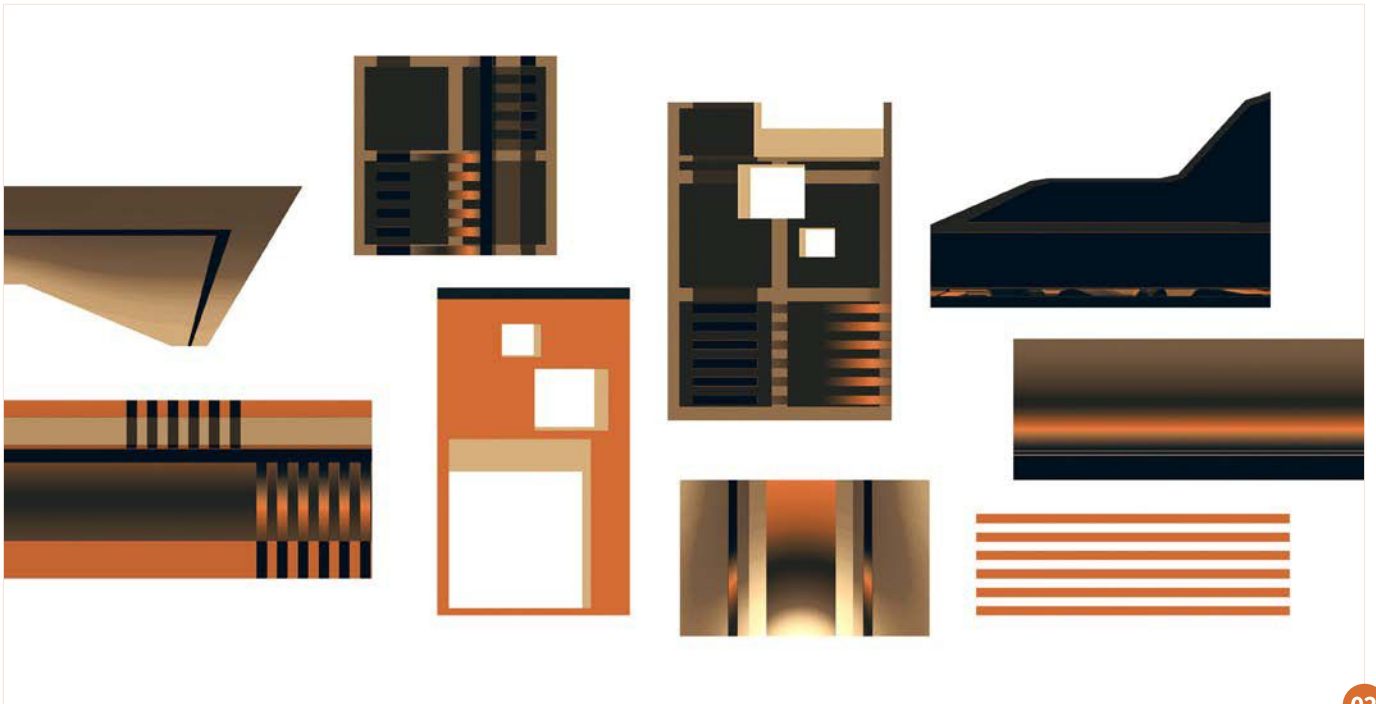
I also have my F1 hot-keyed to flip the canvas horizontally. I use this often to give me a fresh eye whenever I get too deep into my image. Finally, I have actions at the bottom. Actions help speed my process up a lot as it basically records a set of actions/menu items that you can just map to a single button.



01

⚡ PRO TIP Experiment!

I change up my process every so often depending on the subject matter, but the tools I use are pretty much the same. The Transform, Clipping and Smudge tool are essential to my workflow as I prefer to create a collage and finding shapes, rather than painting right from the get go. I find this method to be more fun and experimental which can lead to ideas and compositions you would never think of composing. There are endless possibilities with Photoshop; you can find a new use for any existing tool. At the end of the day, what makes a good image is your own personal knowledge of the foundations such as composition, values, color and lighting.



02

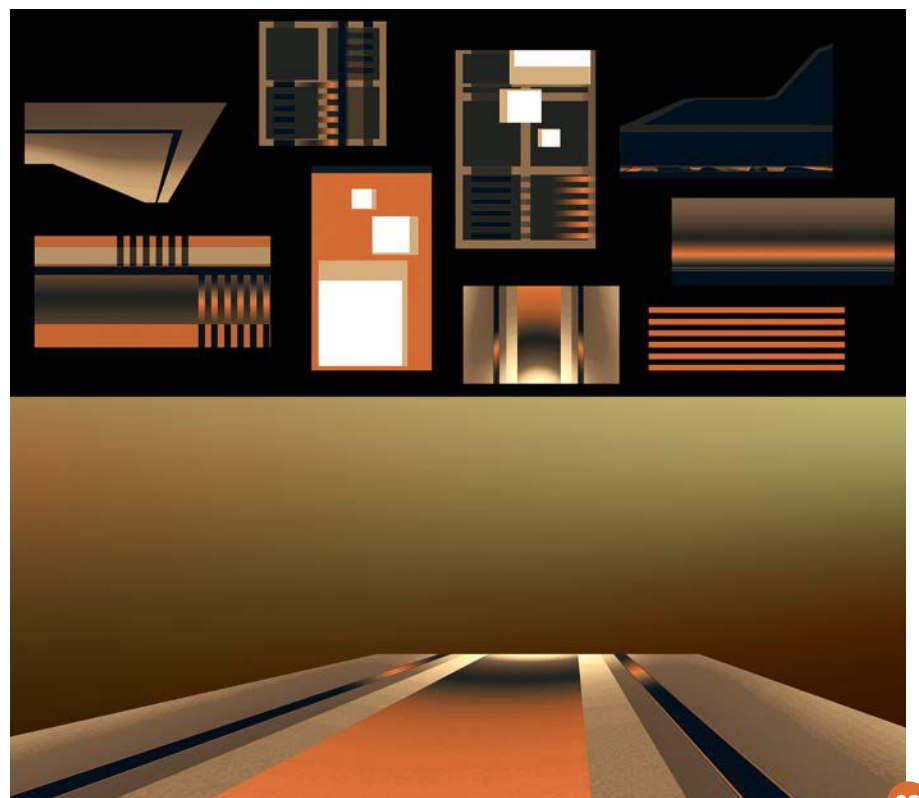
“You can also transform a single abstract shape and clip it into the same silhouette to create countless shapes and variety”

02 Creating initial shape assets: What I occasionally enjoy doing is creating some abstract shapes and use them as assets for the painting. This is done by first blocking out a silhouette with the Lasso and Marquee tool, making a new layer and clipping it to the silhouette layer. Make more abstract shapes so that it stays within the silhouette.

To clip a layer to another one below, you hold ‘Alt’ and hover your cursor in between the two layers, then left-click. You can also transform a single abstract shape and clip it into the same silhouette to create countless shapes and variety. I then add a basic color scheme to them. As we move forward you will see how the Transform, Lasso and Clipping Layers tools are essential to my workflow.

03 Compose the image with assets: I set up my document with the canvas at the bottom and have the asset sheet on the top keeping each individual asset on its own layer. This is so that I can easily look and pick which assets to use to start composing my image.

I first add a background color gradient and then duplicate an asset to the bottom and transform it to a shape I like. In this case, I take one and transform it to look like a one-point perspective ground plane. The shape possibilities are endless.



03

04 Composition focal point: I try to incorporate all my assets and transform them in place to get a basic composition down. Having those assets already made speeds things up a lot which at the end gives me more time to explore different shapes and compositions.

In this case I keep it a simple one-point perspective as we look down a lobby towards the focal point right in the center. I also make a new silhouette and clip multiple assets in for ►

01 Ian uses the Coolorus plugin, the Navigator and layer adjustments window to help him keep an eye on how the image is progressing

02 Create a number of abstract shapes to become assets for the painting

03 Compose your image by adding a background gradient, duplicating and transforming your shape assets

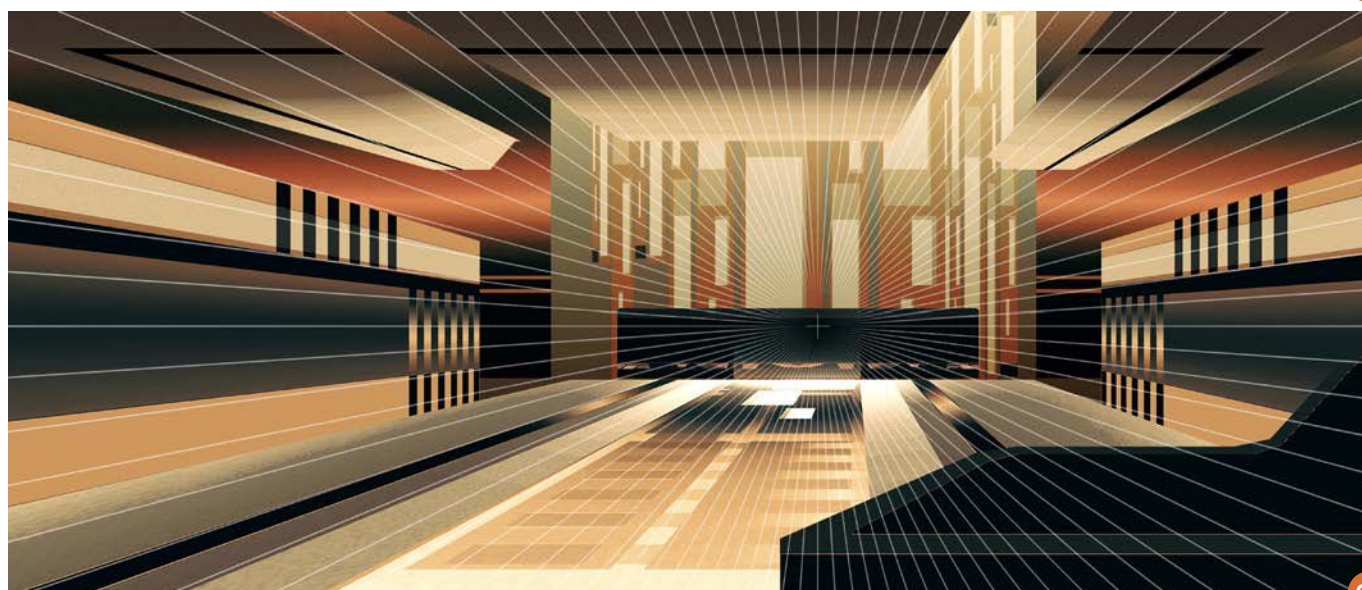
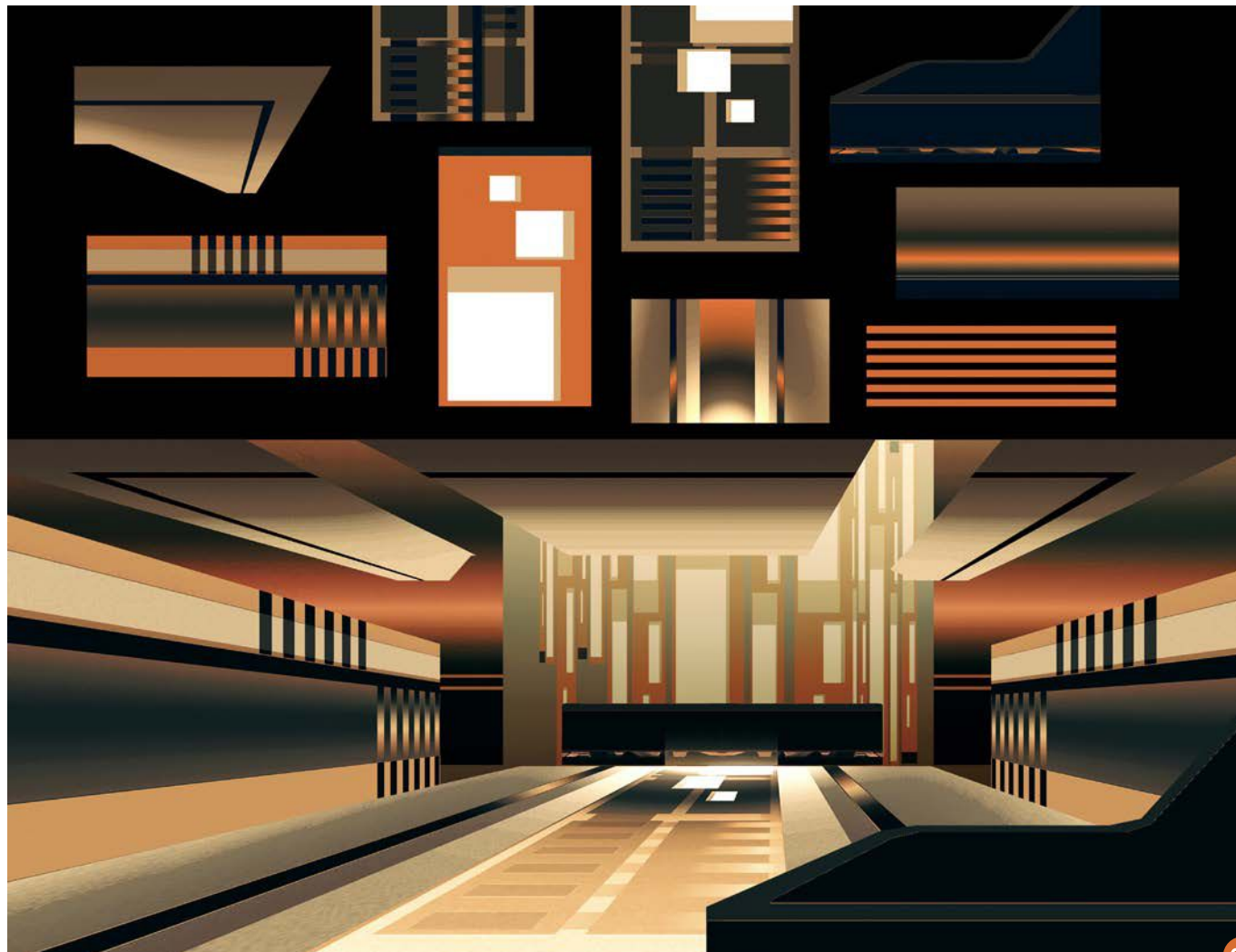
quick detail and interest. I make the center focus consist of more vertical and horizontal lines which contrasts well with all the angled shapes in the foreground and mid ground.

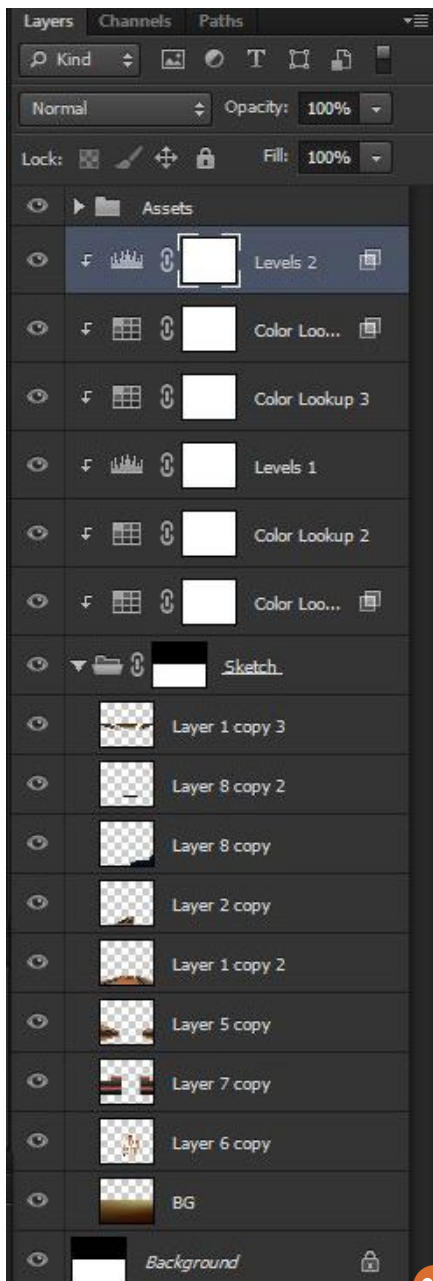
05 **Cleaning perspective issues:** I generally prefer to add my perspective

guidelines a little further into the painting rather than right from the start. This is because if I have a guideline at the very beginning, I tend to be very restricted on what I put down on the canvas and have to follow every detail of the guidelines. Therefore it slows down the entire process as well as restricts you from some compositional ideas.

Once I have a sketch down and ready to move forward, I then add the guidelines and clean up all the perspective errors, even changing the angle of view slightly.

06 **Applying colors and adjustments:** I've got my basic color palette down





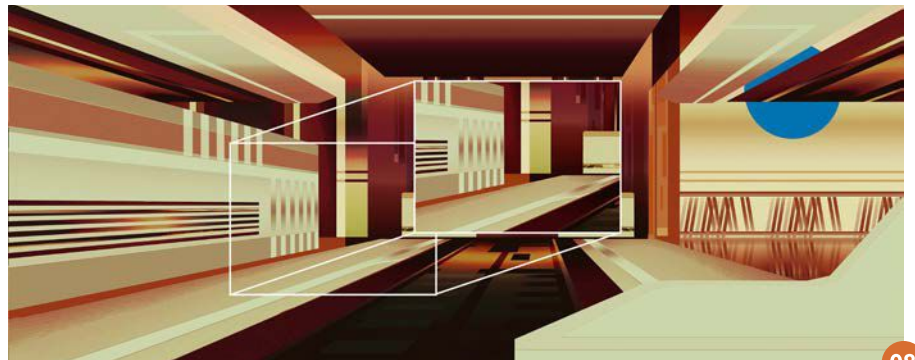
06

from the colors already on the individual assets but I feel it needs some kick. I play around with some adjustments such as the Hue/Saturation, Levels and Color Lookup to get something closer to what I have in mind, which was brighter, more saturated warmth to the overall tone. I have all my layers set into a group and clip the adjustment layers to that group.

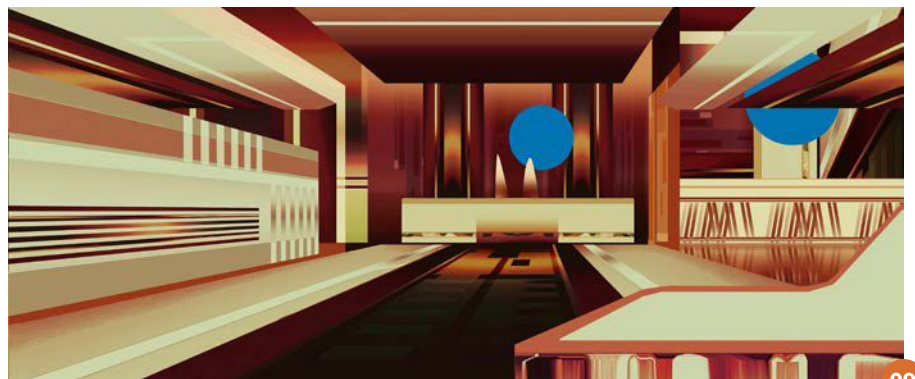
07 Detail passes: Now it's time to add some more visual interest around the image. I start by just thinking about what shapes and colors can contrast well with the current state of the image. In this case, I think that blue contrasts well with the reds and oranges as well as the circle shape to contrast with all the angular ones. I also remove the wall on the right as I think it feels too busy, therefore it made a nice break for the eye to rest on that side. I use the same asset



07



08



09

for the ground plane and use them as a framing element for the figure at the counter. This helps focus the image to the center as well as provide more interesting shapes. I also add some kind of railing towards the right to get some small concentration of detail which contrasts well with the open space.

08 Ctrl+Shift+C: During the early sketch stage, I often experiment with Ctrl+Shift+C which copies everything in a selection regardless of what layer I am. This is a quick and easy way to copy a certain part of an image and keep all the layers intact. This is then moved around the image and transformed with layer adjustments to get an abstract look which will help you find something cool or some happy accidents about where it can be placed. In this case, I copy a section of my painting and move it to the right, as well as rotating it 90-degrees counter-clockwise. I also add some value adjustments now, and some quick details in the background of the image.

09 The Smudge tool: The Smudge tool is great for filling up blank areas and also for creating more complex shapes. You do this ▶

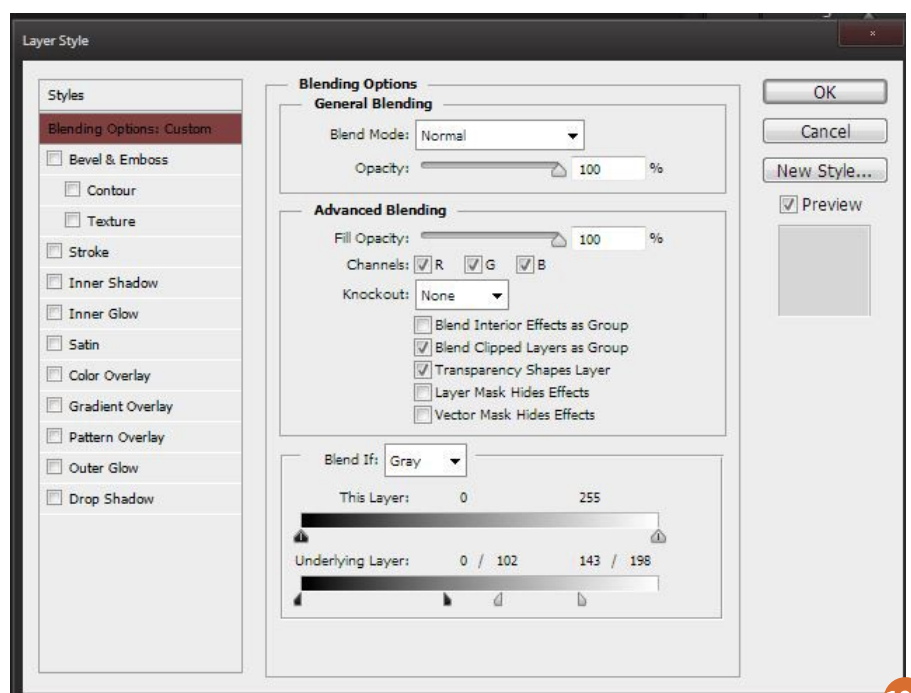
- 04 Play with the composition to find a focal point in the foreground and mid-ground**
- 05 After the basic composition, perspective lines can clean up any perspective issues**
- 06 Set layers in a group and clip new adjustments to the group**
- 07 Create interest by adding shapes and colors that contrast well**
- 08 Copy a section of the image and transform it to find interesting details**
- 09 Details such as another blue circle is added and the pattern in the bottom right corner is smudged**

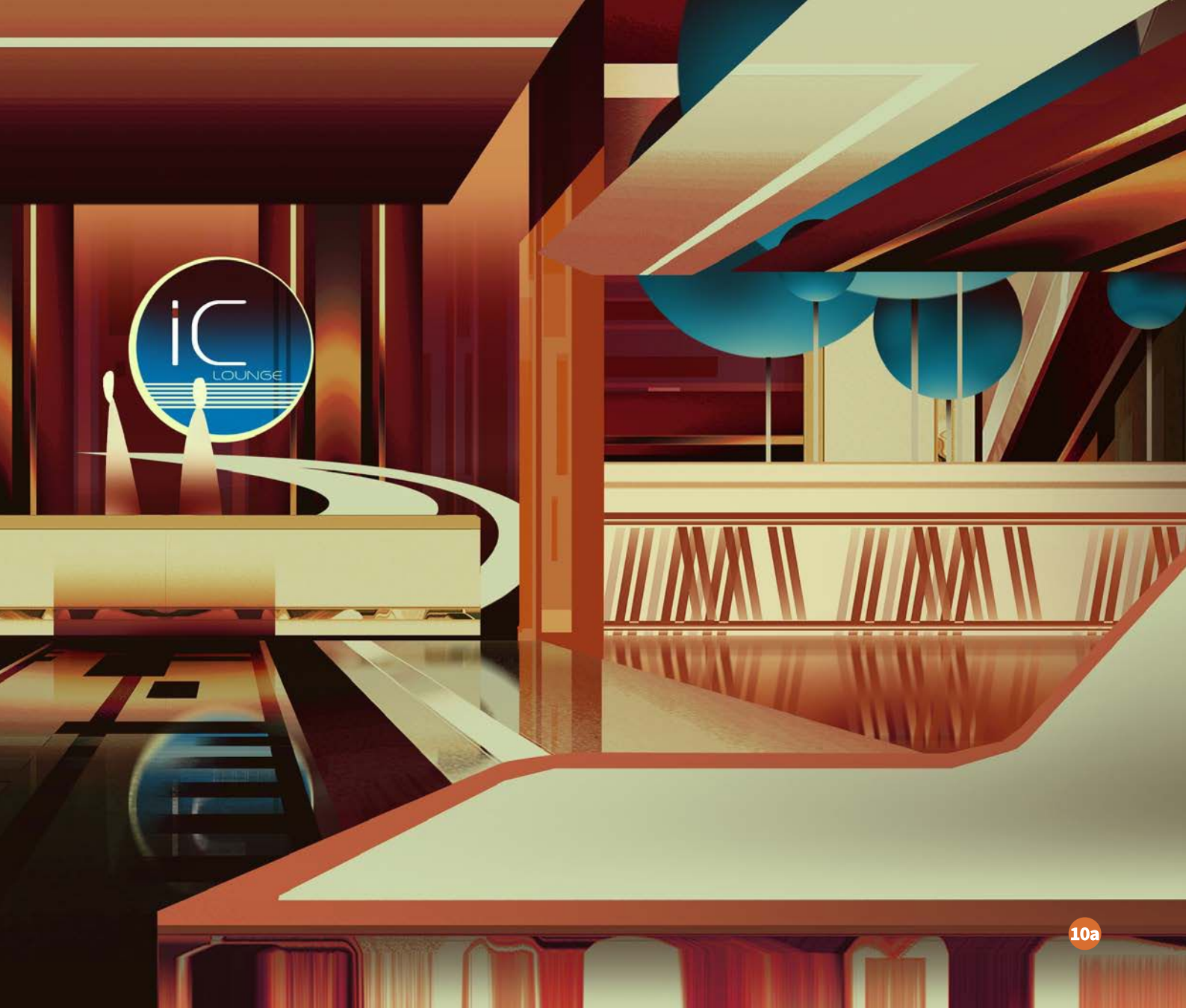


“I copy whatever is above the reflective surface (Ctrl+Shift+C is great for this) flip it upside down, move it into the reflection area and apply a vertical Motion Blur to it”

by setting the Smudge tool to 100% Opacity and moving sections around. This is done best with a hard-edged brush. I tend to use a square brush for this tool as it gives me straight and clean edges.

After working on more details and adding a blue circle right at the center (I feel that the center focus needs to read stronger and have more interesting contrasts), the bottom-right corner looks odd. I think this is because the thickness of that patterned line is the same width as most of the lines throughout the painting. Therefore by smudging parts of that line downwards, not only do I fill up that area, but also it looks a lot more unified with the pattern. So this is a very





quick way of adding detail that fits well with the surroundings, instead of having to paint and fix details into fit.

10 Reflections: How I go about reflections is I will copy whatever is above the reflective surface (Ctrl+Shift+C is great for this) flip it upside-down, move it into the reflection area and apply a vertical Motion Blur to it. You can then erase or mask out certain parts of the ground that are not reflective.

Fortunately, there's a quick way to control where you want the reflections to show. When you double-click on a layer (a little towards the right-side of the layer name text), you bring up the Layer Style menu. Right at the very bottom there are sliders that let you control whether you want the dark or light values of your current layer to be transparent (fig. 10b). Also, you can control if you want the dark or light values of the underlying layer to show through the current

layer. This is great for masking out reflections that are not supposed to show on a dark (or light) surface instead of having to manually hand Lasso and mask out areas, as sometimes the reflective material shape could be very complex.

11 Final touches and details: As we get close to the end, I add some more blue circles to the top-left corner of the image as it was too heavy on the right side. They are meant to be some contemporary sculpture or decoration. I add more details on the counter with some text to show small details. I also decide to add an arc shape right behind the counter as I think the overall flow of the image seems too stale, so having that there makes it so that there's more eye flow that leads to the figures and logo.

I darken the edges of the image so that the contrast is higher towards the center which makes a better focal point. To even further the contrasts, I do a slight warm color dodge at the

center to brighten and saturate that area up. I also tend to add a noise layer right at the end just so that it unifies the entire image slightly. I sign it off, and I'm done! Thanks for reading this and I hope this little insight of my process was helpful! ●

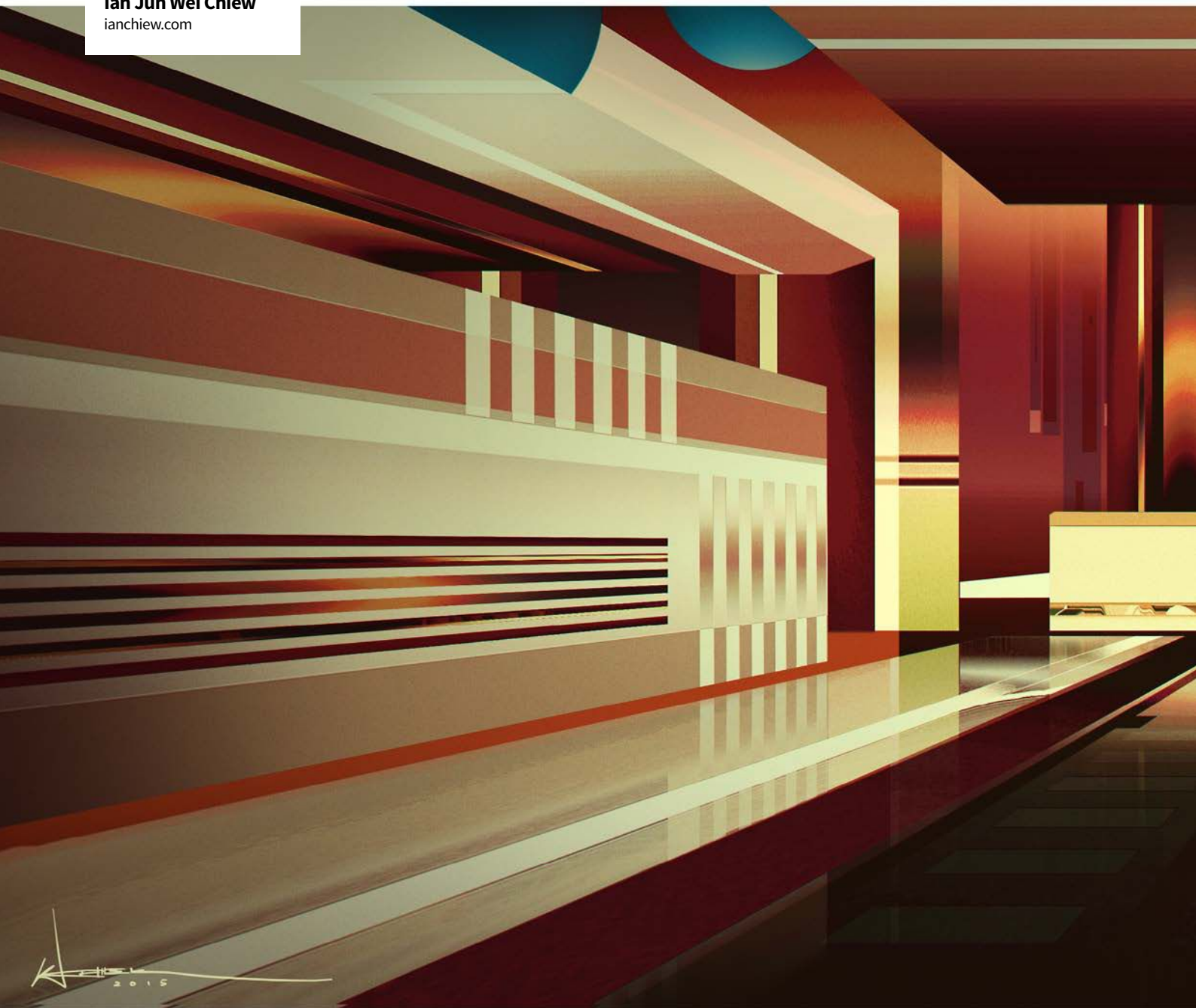
10a Add reflections to give the image extra depth using Ctrl+Shift+C

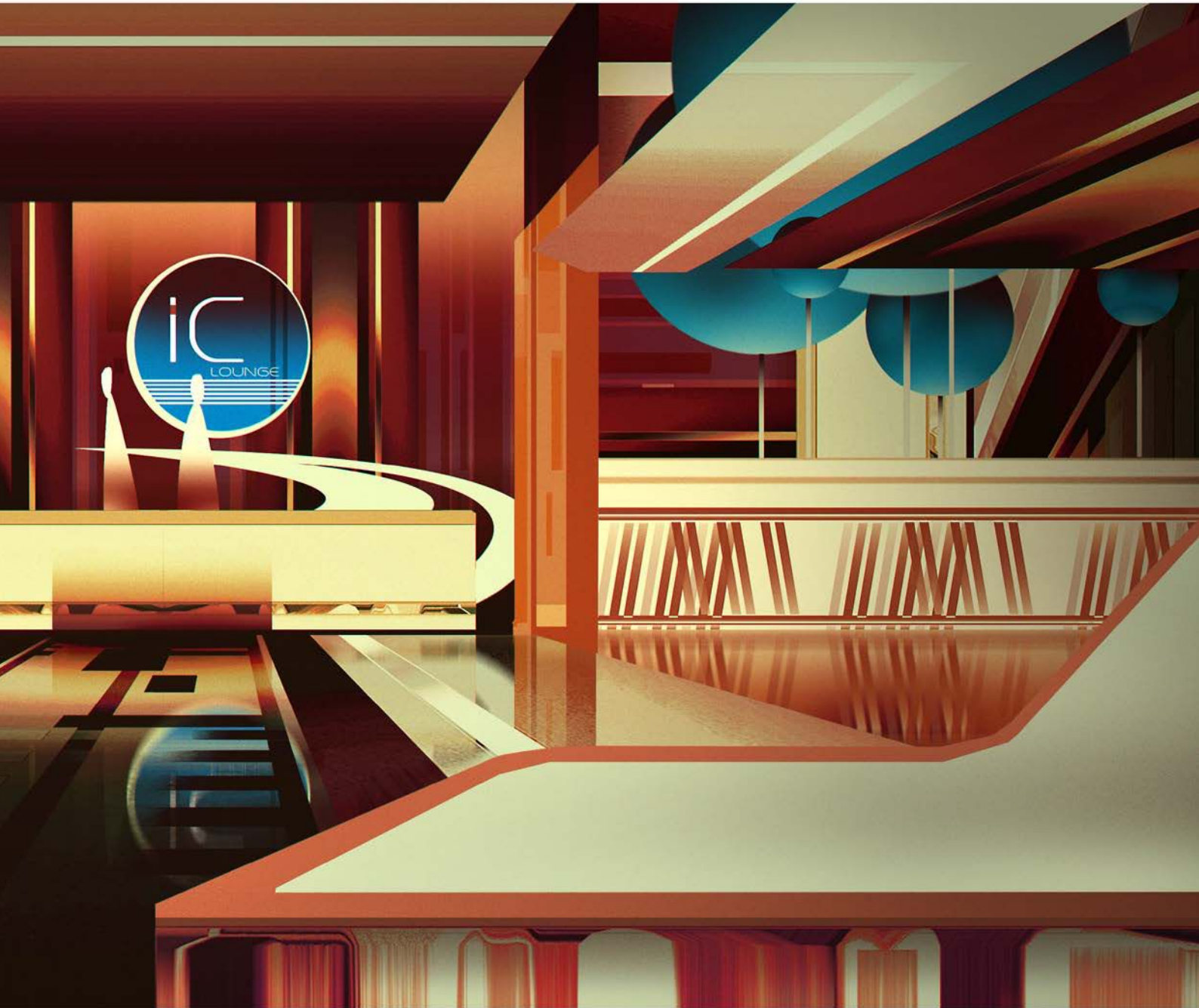
10b Sliders in the Layer style tool allow you to control the light and dark values of a layer

The Artist



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Paint light and color

Create a light filled,
atmospheric fantasy
scene with this tutorial
from Christoph Peters

plus

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Oscar Gregeborn
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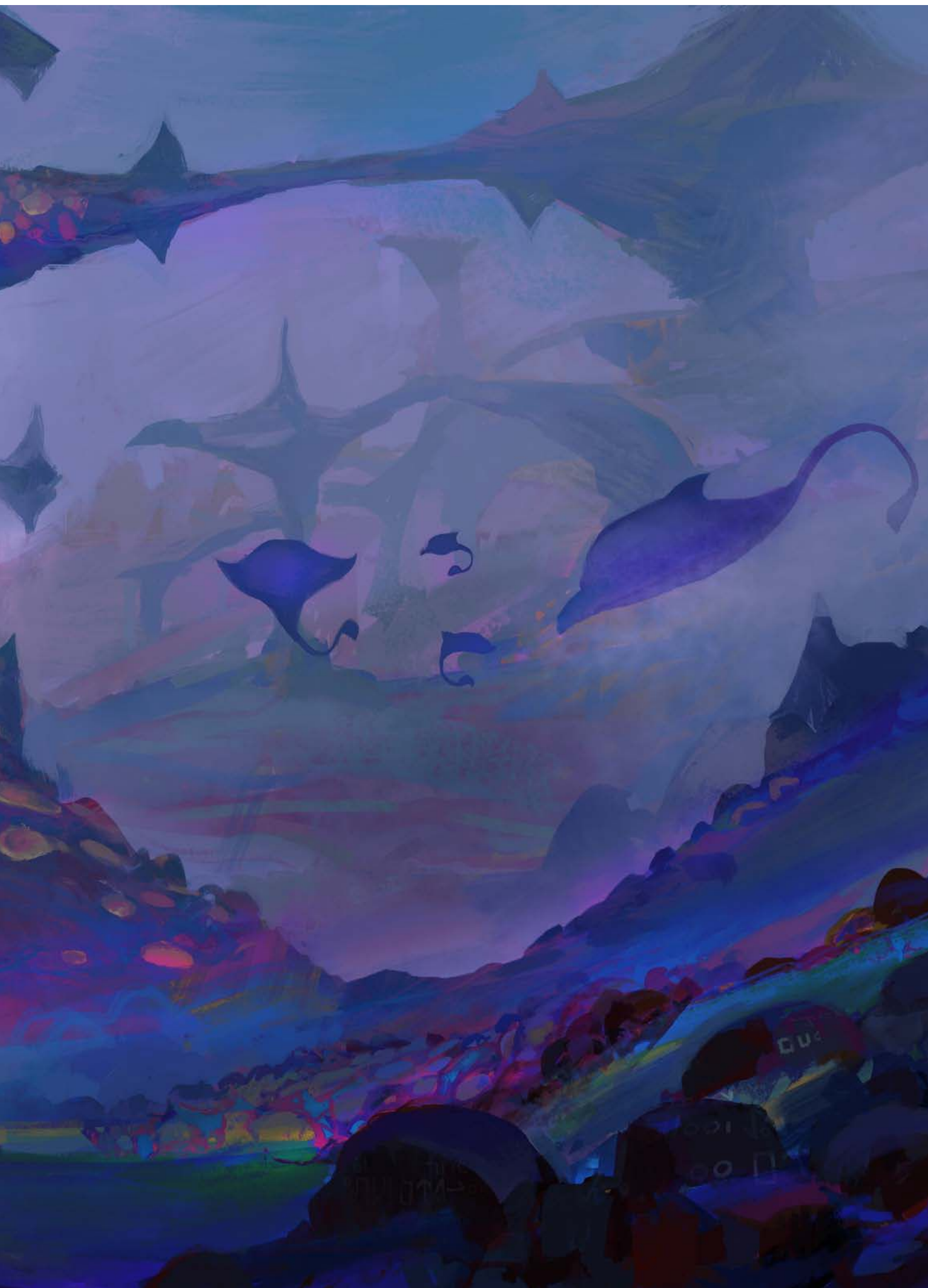
Software Used:
Photoshop

Oscar Gregeborn is an up and coming artist from Oslo, Norway. He continues to study art and design while making a living and growing his reputation with freelance work.

Underwater alien landscape

Discover how you can quickly and simply create an atmospheric alien underwater landscape with this step by step guide from Oscar Gregeborn ▶





Refresh your skills with these handy tips...

My work is often referred to as the marriage of strange color and outlandish landscapes. Throughout this project I am going to guide you through the making of an entire painting. I will show you how I generate ideas, and how I bring those ideas to life, as well as how I go about creating full-blown illustrations. I will touch upon subjects like; light, color, values, and much more. You will also learn a plethora of tips and techniques that I have gathered on my own journey into the world of art.

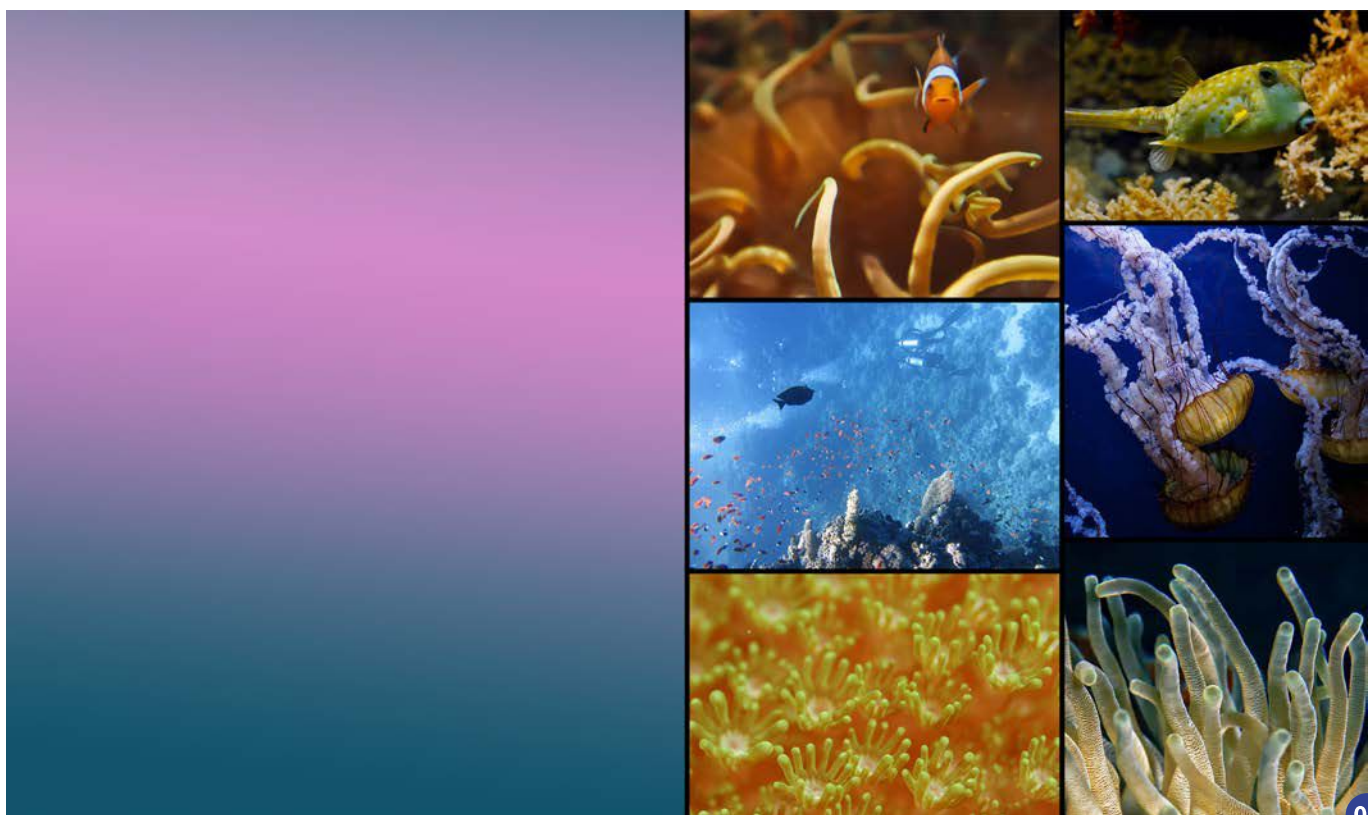
It was not long ago that I sat there myself, looking at tutorials, buying art books, and

studying the old masters in an effort to become what I am today. Because of this, I hope I can provide greater insight into how it is done, but also more importantly, why it is done. Let me make myself clear though: I am still learning, a lot. I still look up to and admire the work of many, many people that are far above me. I still struggle, and I try to learn something new each day. I try to push my boundaries every time I paint, and so should you. It is the best way to improve as an artist. I hope this tutorial is insightful, and I hope you learn something new from reading through it.

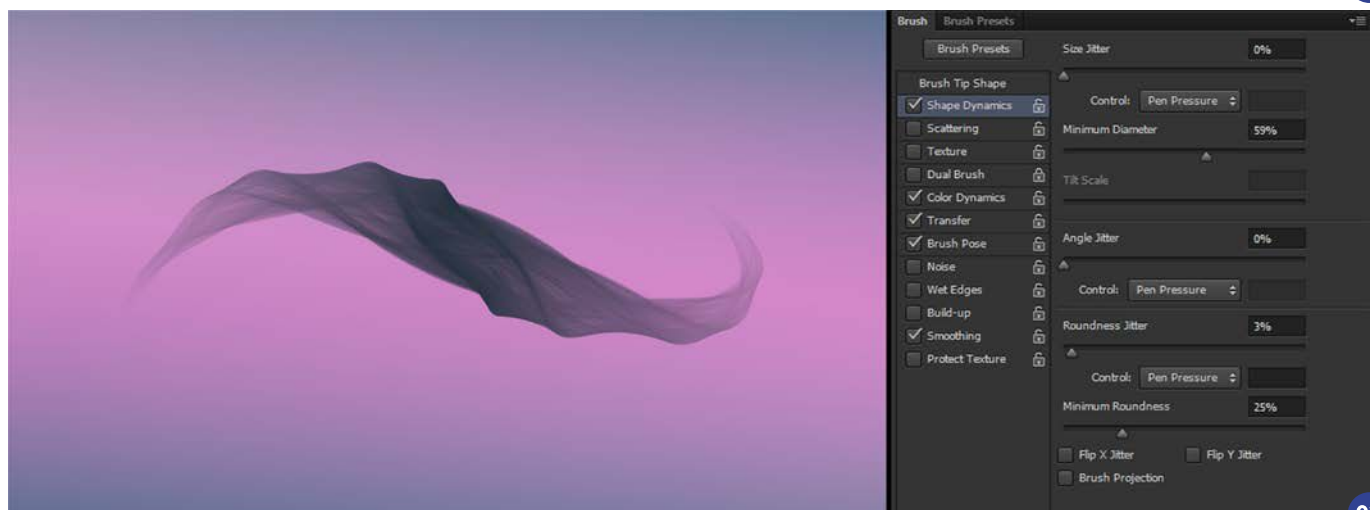
01 Starting out: It is said that staring at an entirely blank canvas is the most intimidating feeling when it comes to painting,

and I wholeheartedly agree. Luckily there are ways of combating this feeling. I have found that looking up references and inspiration puts my mind at ease, and I have a much easier time approaching the beginning of a painting.

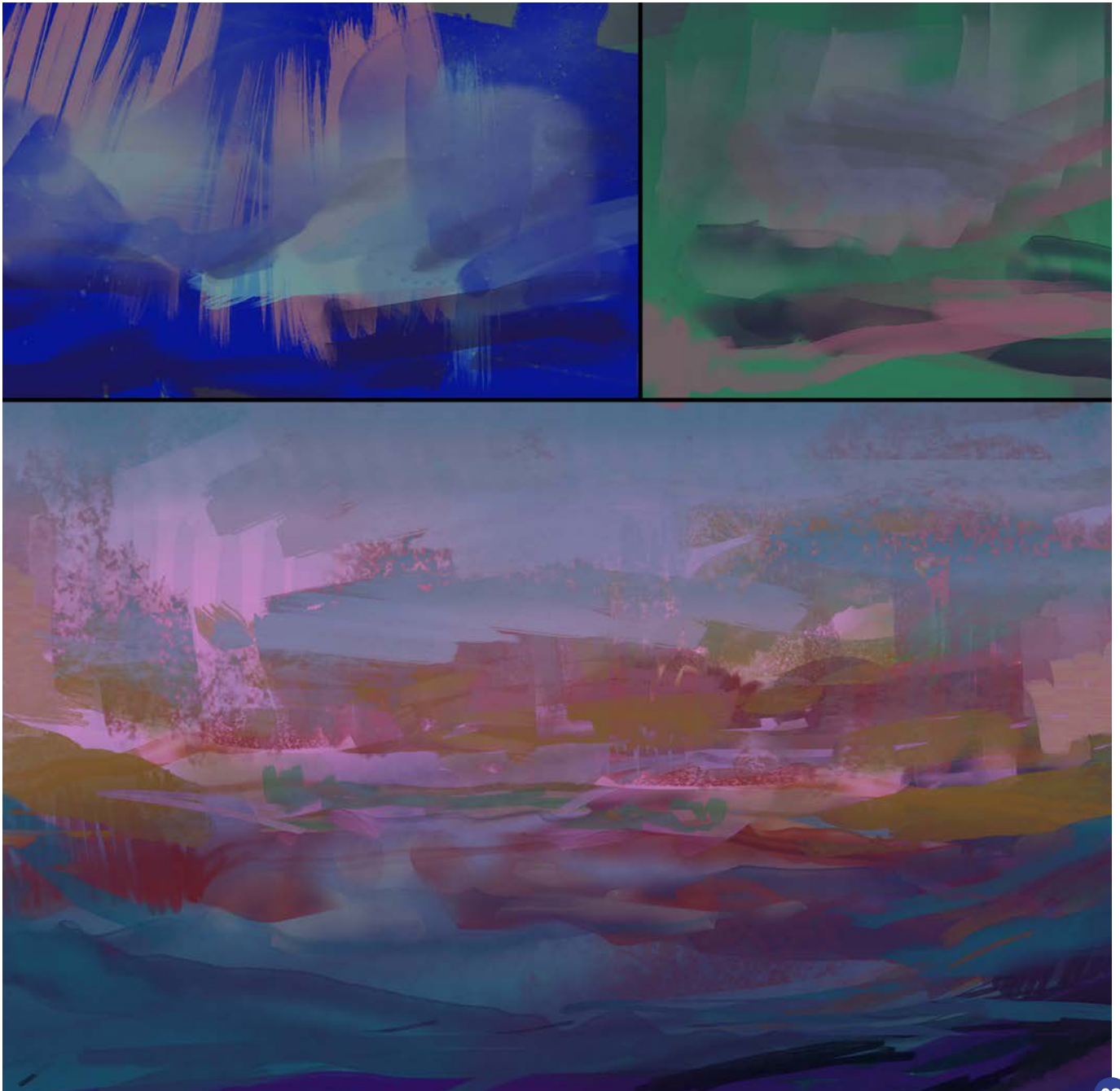
Knowing where to look however, can be a daunting task in itself. I like to approach it from multiple angles; the internet is teeming with creative work, but it's also great to find inspiration beyond the usual portfolio sites. One medium that I enjoy in particular, are art books. I own a handful of them, and look through them religiously every fortnight or so. In this case though, I found myself jumping into the task without much research in advance, eager to start the painting.



01



02



03

02 Getting comfortable: It may sound alien to many of the seasoned professionals out there, but becoming comfortable with the digital medium is one of the biggest hurdles for beginners. After a good while spent in Photoshop you are going to stumble upon a fair few shortcuts that help out immensely. There are two easy techniques however, that I simply cannot live without. While having the Brush tool selected:

1. Holding Alt brings forth the Eyedropper tool, and you are free to select any color on the canvas. This means that you can rapidly select a certain color on the canvas, and keep painting with that color at the press of only one key.

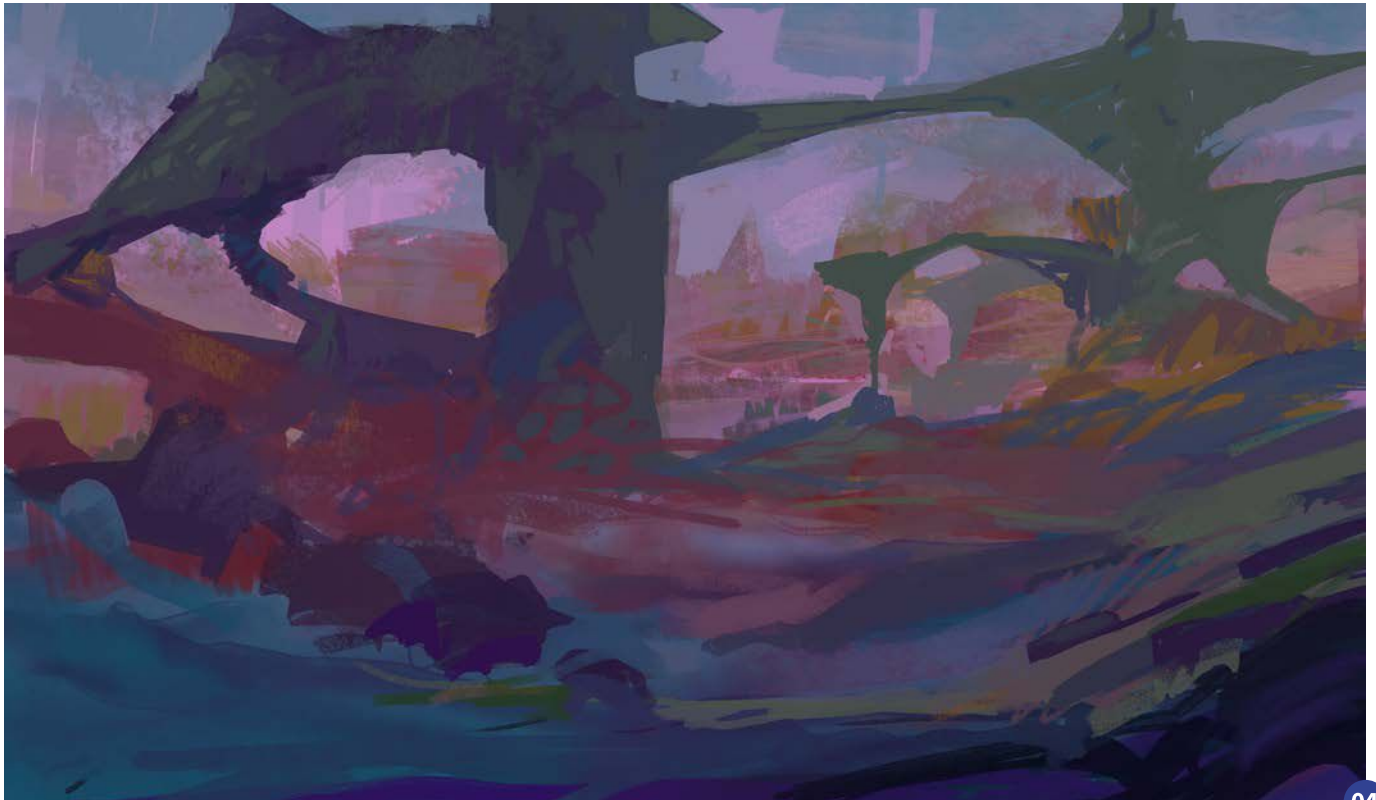
2. Holding Alt+right mouse (Ctrl+Option for a Mac) and dragging your pen over the tablet, will change the size of your brush.

Mastering these techniques can take some time, but they will definitely speed up your workflow as you paint.

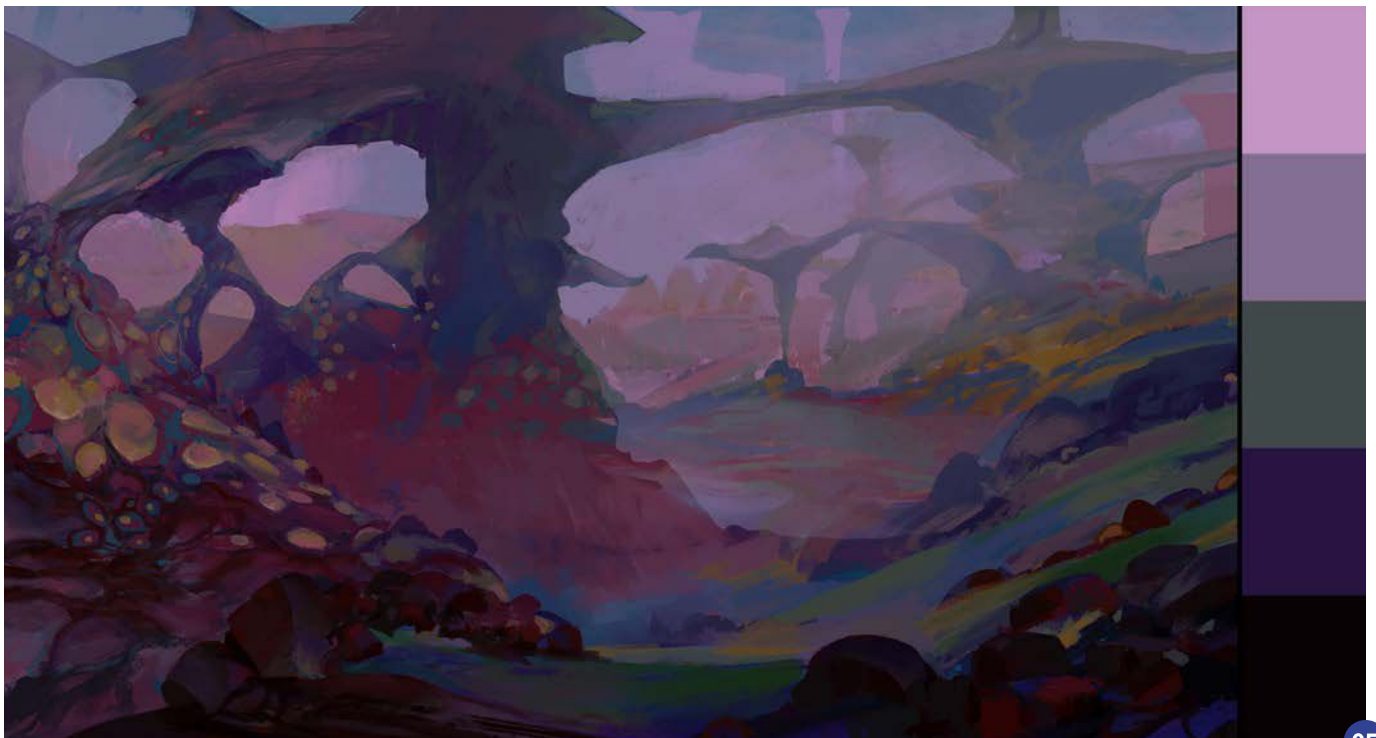
03 Make a mess: Whenever beginners ask me how to start a painting; the first thing I suggest is that they lump a ton of paint onto the canvas. As mentioned in step one, a blank canvas is extremely intimidating, and doing this helps with the intimidation. Use absurd brushes and insane colors, you can even photo-bash and use filters if you wish to; the digital medium is incredibly malleable. This works great both as a

warm up, and to get the creative juices flowing, so to speak. ►

- 01 Oscar gathered references, and began to lay out colored gradients that represent the palettes he wished to explore**
- 02 Finding a good brush is equally important. Oscar often toys around with brush settings until he finds something interesting and unexpected**
- 03 Out of the three variations Oscar made, he discarded the first two, and began working on the third**



04



05

As for this project, I spend around 10 minutes in this phase, though if you are not under a deadline, you can spend as much time as you wish. Don't be afraid to create multiples of these 'messes', as this is ample opportunity to explore color and mood. Although you can use any brush you like, I recommend a brush that contains a bit of texture; cloud brushes, watercolor brushes and calligraphy brushes work especially well for this.

04 Finding the forms: Now that you have a canvas full of clutter and chaos, you are ready to start hunting for shapes. It's very much akin to looking for shapes in the clouds, only this time you search for ridges, spires, arches and everything else that make up a fantasy landscape. I tend to simply continue to paint on top of the mess I created earlier, but you can also draw lines if that is what you are comfortable with.

For this project, I neglect to use a perspective grid. It is something that can often clutter up the process, and halts creativity for beginners. If you are comfortable with plotting a perspective grid, then I very much advise you to use it. Though for a painting like this, a rough estimate of the perspective is often enough. For interiors as well as bigger exterior architecture, a perspective grid is most definitely preferred.

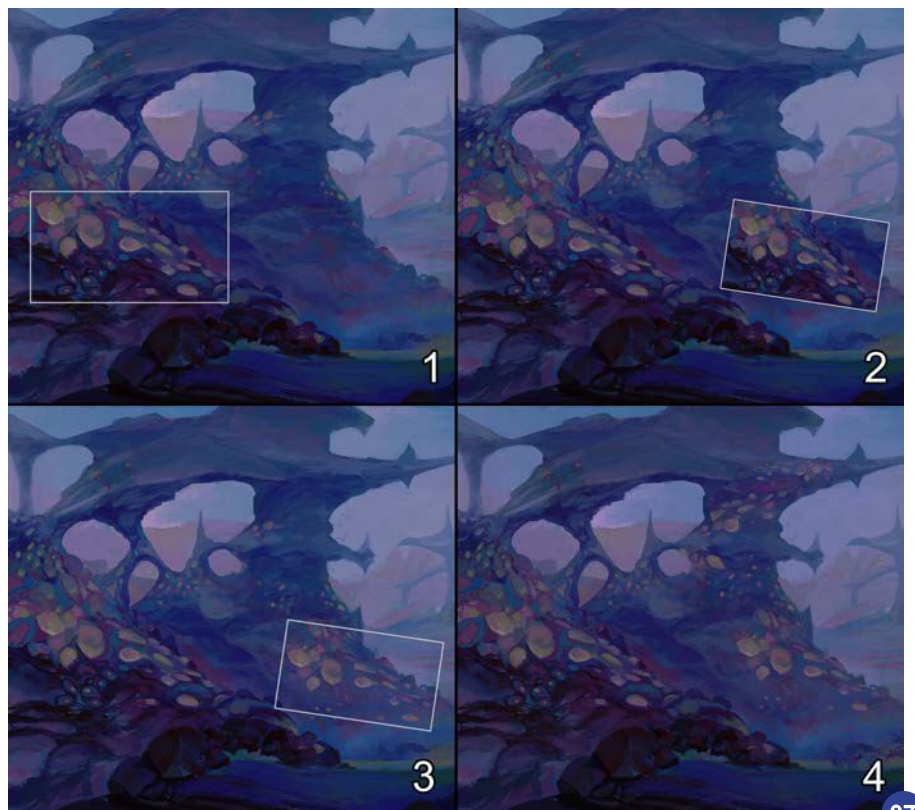
05 The value range: It is important to remember that your painting should contain the entire range of values, all the way from snow-white to pitch-black. A general rule is that the values should get less pronounced the further back into the image you move. The foreground should be teeming with both darks and lights, though often trending towards the dark. The background should consist of mostly gray tones, while the mid-ground should have something of a mix of the two.

It is also worth mentioning that objects tend to become somewhat lighter as they reach the background, especially so when you are painting sunlight. In the case of this painting I am working with an underwater scene, but the value range should still stay relatively similar. If your values are causing you significant trouble, then I recommend starting your paintings in grayscale.

06 Color palette: Colors make up a large part of the painting, so it is important that they work well with each other. In the case of this painting, I have to make the colors fit an alien underwater theme. This means that blue should be the most dominant color of the palette. You are of course allowed to stray slightly away from your palette, but it should be used as a general guideline. I recommend that you switch up the color of your brush quite often as you paint.

Having a lot of hue variation adds significant interest to your painting, and it's one of the hallmarks of my own style. This variation is especially evident in how the rocks in the foreground are painted. You can see reds, purples and blues being integrated into the shadows.

07 Recycling: A technique I learned early on was to recycle parts of the painting. I will copy parts of what I have already painted, ►



PRO TIPS

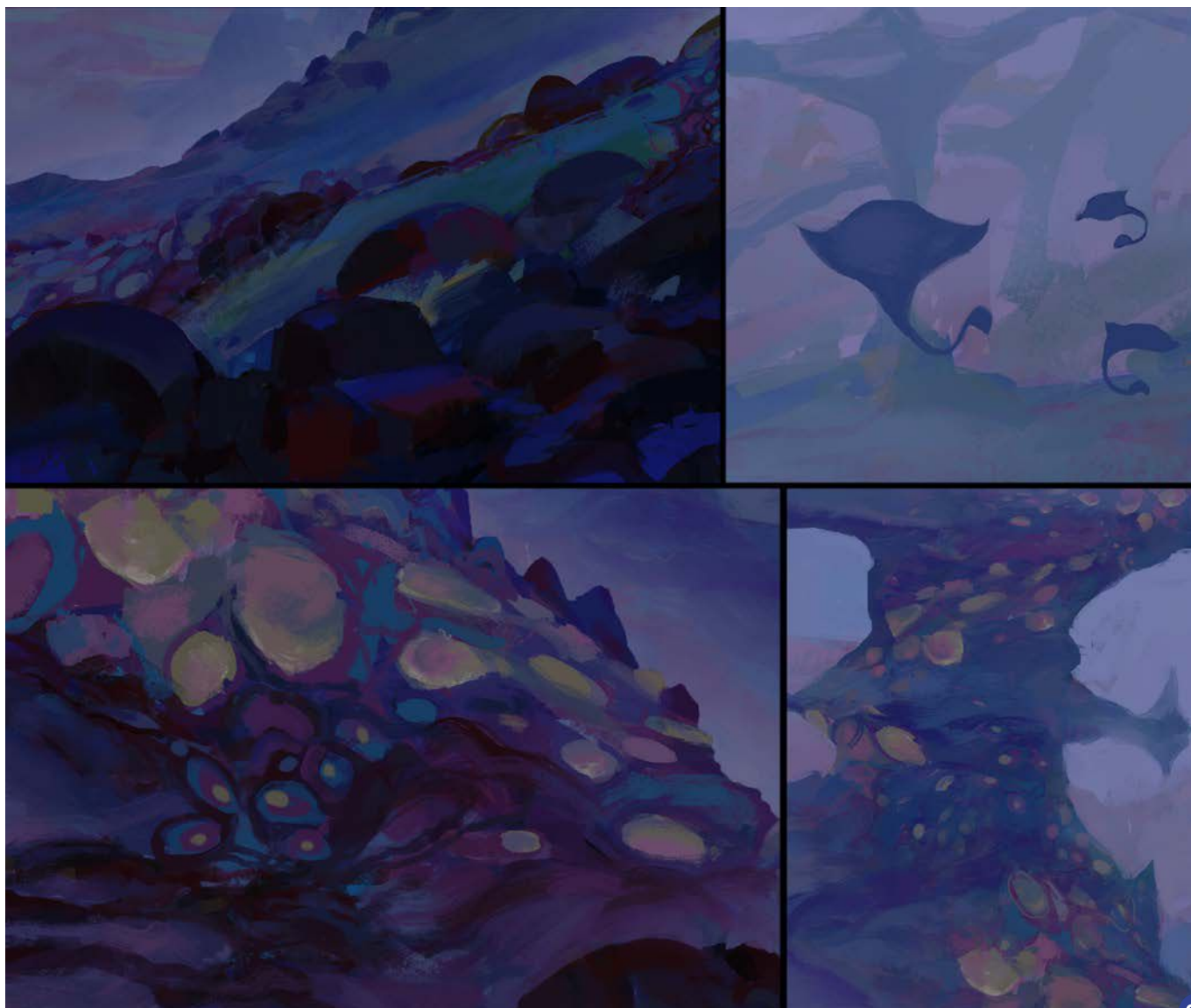
Flip the canvas!

Flipping the canvas can be incredibly useful if you wish to know if your composition is working or not. Found under Image > Image Rotation > Flip Canvas Horizontal, I suggest you key-bind it and learn to use it extensively while painting. If your painting suddenly feels 'weird' or 'off' after flipping the canvas, it's a big indication that your composition might need some work. This is the Photoshop equivalent of looking at your painting through a mirror. Your eyes are essentially seeing an entirely new painting, and it makes it incredibly easy to spot problems in your work.

Values matter

Colors are extremely important, but so are the underlying values. A quick way to get a look at your painting in grayscale is to make a Hue/Saturation adjustment. Drag the Saturation slide down to 100. Now you can flick that adjustment layer off and on as you please throughout the painting process, allowing you to quickly determine if your values are working or not. I use this trick all the time, and I encourage you do the same.

- 04** Use a darker tone for the mid-ground structures, pushing them away from the background
- 05** The value-chart on the left corresponds to the different colors on the canvas, and indicates that the values are varied enough
- 06** Use the adjustment tools Levels and Color Balance to achieve the desired palette
- 07** Oscar copied the desired area, pasted it atop a less detailed area, and used the layer modes to get the desired blend



“One of my favorite tools in Photoshop is the Sponge tool. It lets me saturate or desaturate areas at will. It is incredibly useful when you want to create that eerie, otherworldly glow”

usually a more detailed area, then paste it over a less detailed area. By using layer modes like Lighten and Darker Color, the copied part merges better with the background. In this case I copied the jeweled area on the right-side of the painting, and pasted it over the hills in the mid-ground, as well as the larger rock formation in the center of the image.

Nothing is stopping you from using images you have painted previously either, as long as these are personal works. I have a number of unreleased paintings, in addition to paint-textures that I often sample to give my new work some flair. Not only does this technique add an extra

layer of detail to the painting, but it also spares you a significant amount of time compared to if you were to paint everything from scratch instead.

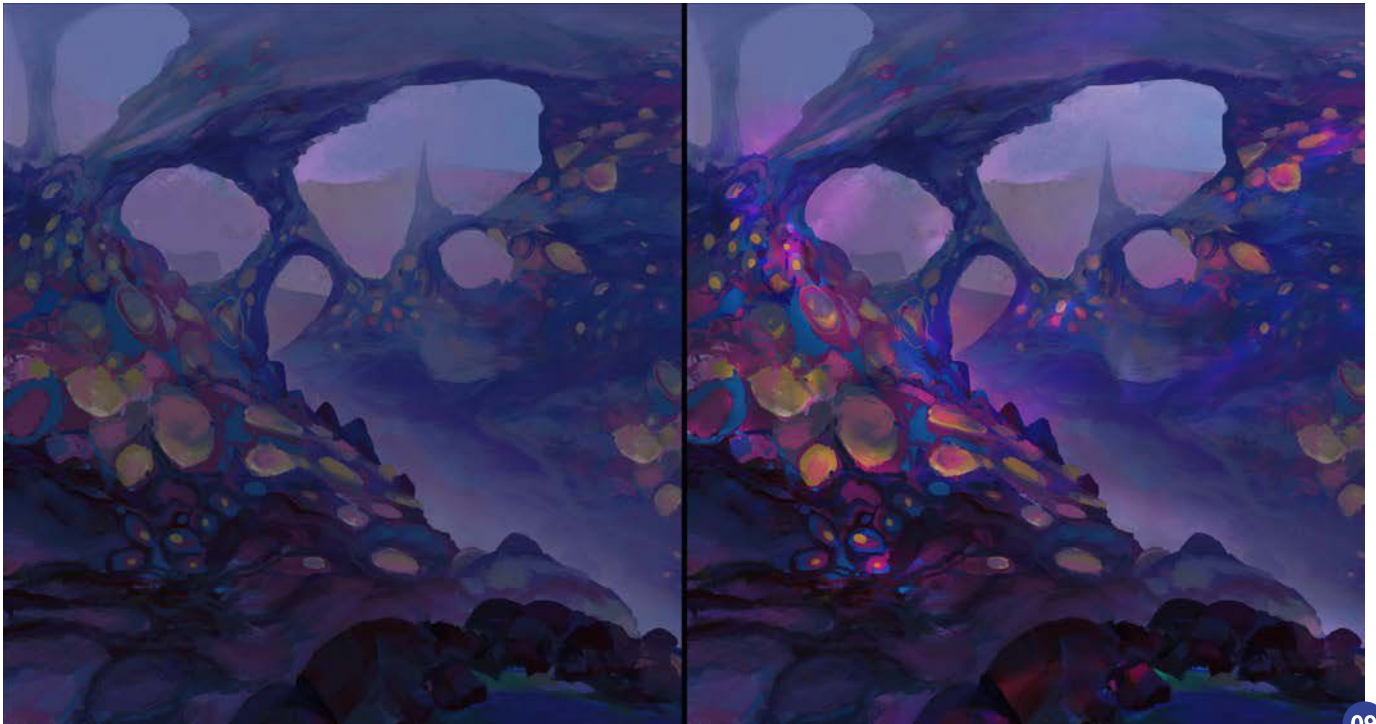
08 A cohesive world: It is incredibly important that you have a good sense of the world you are creating, if you wish to paint a believable landscape. Here we are dealing with an underwater alien world, so this tells me a number of things:

1. The lighting should be soft and scattered.
2. The world should feel unfamiliar, not relating to anything you find on earth.
3. Water scatters light much more effectively than air, so the atmospheric perspective should be pushed.
4. The rock formations should be smooth, as the water grinds away at them over millions of years.

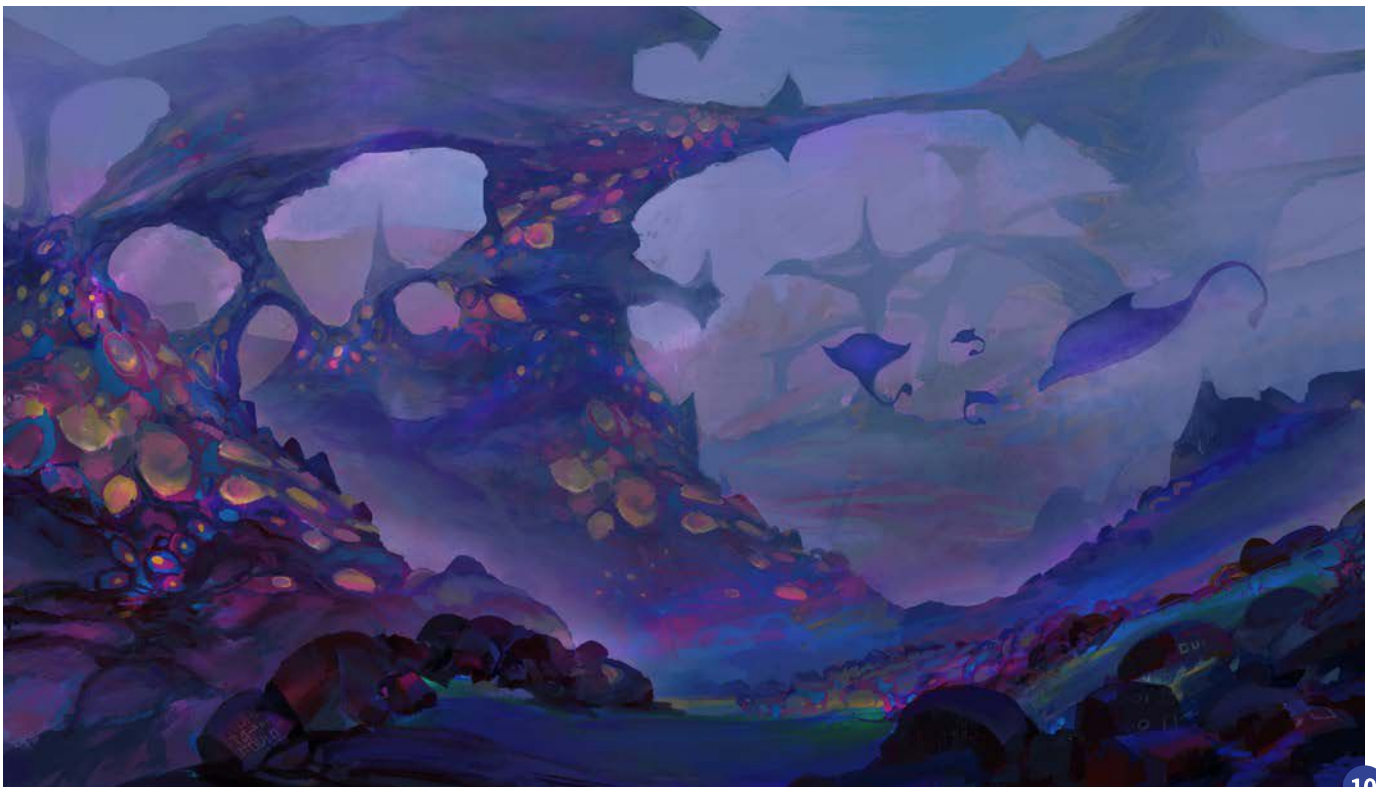
The intention of a list like this is to make the world you paint more cohesive. Physics and logic

apply, even though you are painting an alien landscape. I paint the rocks somewhat round and smooth, and the jewels on the right-hand-side of the painting are painted like ellipses in an effort to adhere to the theme.

09 Making it pop! One of my favorite tools in Photoshop is the Sponge tool. It lets me saturate or desaturate areas at will. It is incredibly useful when you want to create that eerie, otherworldly glow. By keeping the Flow at around 20%, I can carefully elevate the luminosity and saturation of certain areas as I please. I wish to give the jewels scattered on the rock-formations this extra glow. I also use this tool to lighten some of the ground near the rocks in the foreground. This light looks unnatural, and suggests that something biological might be giving off the mysterious glow, whether its fungi, algae, corals, or something entirely different. This tool should be handled with care though, as too frequent use can make the painting look 'blown out'; a look we often wish to avoid.



09



10

10 Ten thousand brushstrokes: It is pivotal to remember that painting is a marathon, not a sprint. The only way to get good results, is to put in the hours needed.

I recommend that you paint slowly, with an understanding of why you put down each stroke. At this point I have spent around two hours on the painting, but I also have a lot of experience doing this kind of work, so it often comes more naturally to me.

Spending thrice that amount should not worry you when you are in the learning stages. I also suggest that you take regular breaks from the painting.

Sitting still for five hours is not good for your body, so go downstairs, go on a short walk or do something entirely different. Not only do you get your blood circulation going again, but you also get to come back to your work with a fresh pair of eyes! ●

08 The painting has to follow the physics of the world. The rocks are rounded, the atmosphere pushed, and a few swimming creatures are added

09 By using the Sponge tool, you can add a peculiar glow to areas at will

10 The devil is in the detail. To get good results, you have to put in the time and the effort

The Artist



Oscar Gregeborn
oscargregeborn.com





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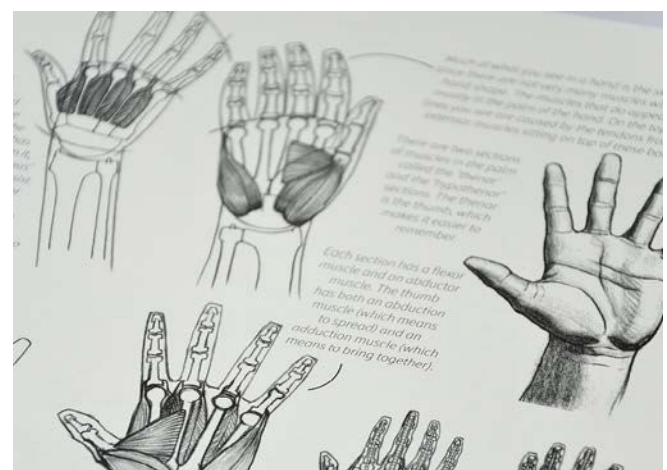
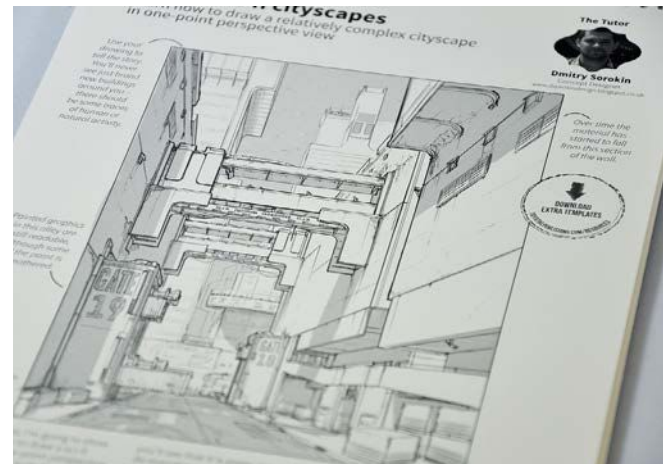
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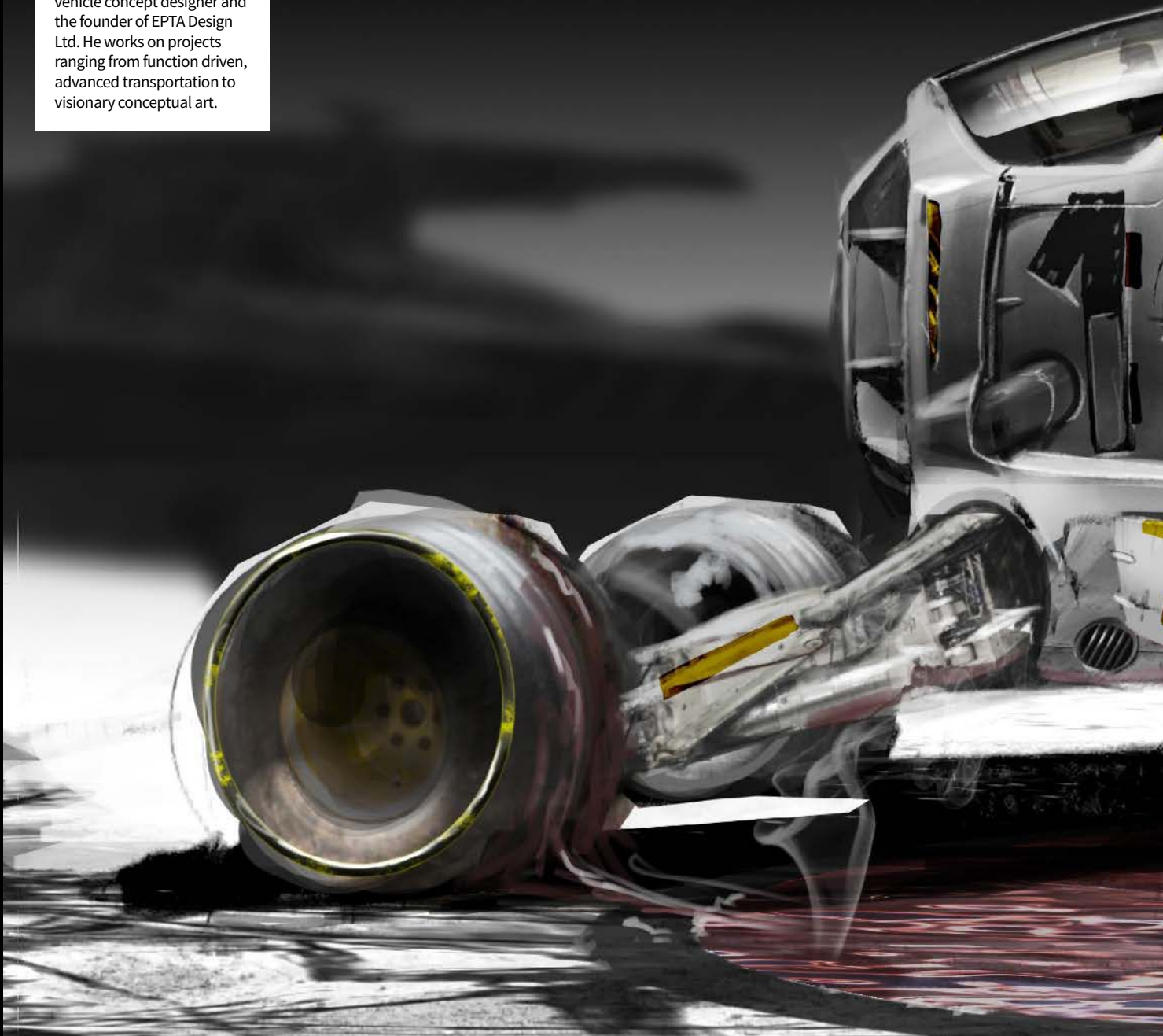


Luigi Memola

memolaluigi.blogspot.sg

Software Used:
Photoshop

Luigi Memola is a senior vehicle concept designer and the founder of EPTA Design Ltd. He works on projects ranging from function driven, advanced transportation to visionary conceptual art.



Render a sci-fi vehicle

Luigi Memola shows how he transformed one of his Inktober sketches into a fully rendered vehicle design ▶





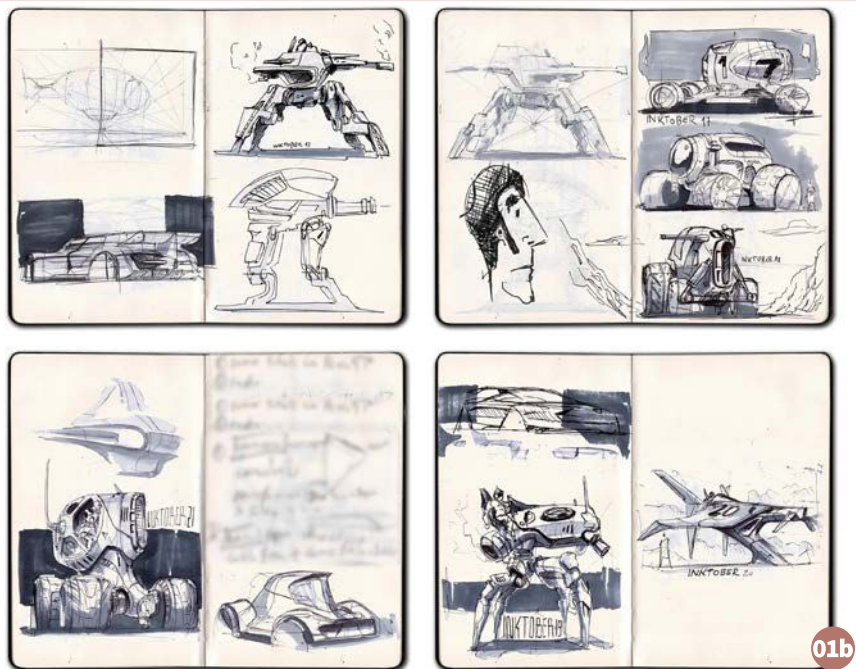
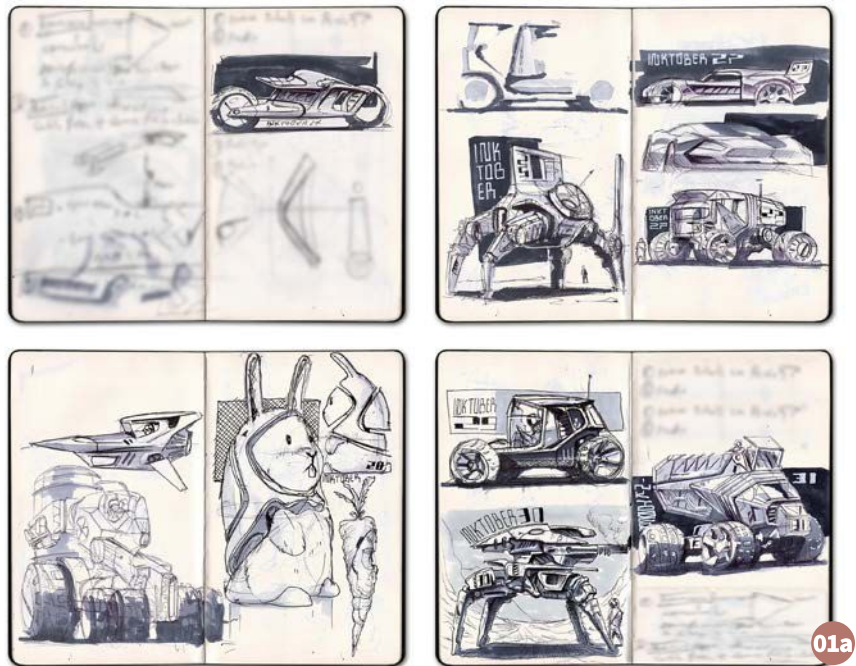
Develop a quick sketch into a complete design...

The rendering of a design is a lot of fun, but remember that the design is a form of communication whose purpose is to help provide extra information. I classify information in three types; the first being the design of information to better understand the forms, breakdowns and the material of different components. The second is to provide functional information to understand how to use the object, how to work a machine and so on. Then finally, storytelling information is needed to understand the context; where it is used and how the object interacts with its natural environment. Obviously, the imagination is the most important aspect. So despite the partial use of photobashing techniques, here I did not seek specifically to achieve a photorealistic result with this exercise.

01 Identify the right sketch: Having occasions to stop and draw is a good way to develop your skills critical to the design that is being developed. A small sketchbook allows you to draw at any time. In my moleskin sketchbook (210mm x 130mm) I collected designs that would eventually participate, in a small way, to the wonderful initiative of Jake Parker's Inktober 2015.

I could not reach the quality and consistency of other big names in the concept art world such as Scott Robertson or Vaughan Ling, but looking at my sketches I did however identify some decent designs to be published on my Instagram account. From a practical standpoint, I excluded designs that were too 'dirty' from the marker and lacked a strong silhouette.

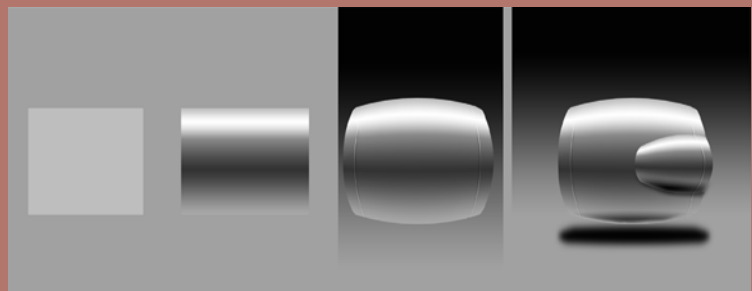
02 From analogue to digital: Only a few of the sketches that I do in my albums



PRO TIP

Shadow theory

The secret to shading an object is to identify the simple volumes that make up its parts. With a few strokes of black-and-white you can communicate any form. First, add graduated strips of dark and light to indicate the curvature of the shape. Then adjust the shape to fit the sense of volume you want to give, and a background that highlights the shading on the object. Finally add a shadow and reflections indicating how the object interacts with its setting.

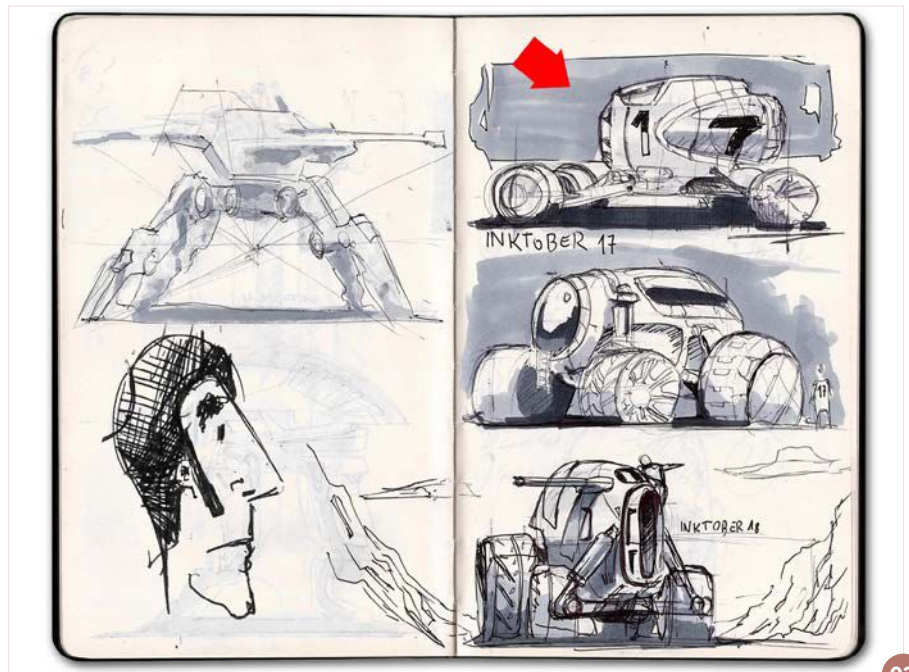


are meant to step into Photoshop or develop into 3D designs. In fact, the drawing I decided to take into Photoshop was the result of inspiration, and was not premeditated. From among the drawings I chose an interesting sketch made on October 17, 2015.

I found that it was sufficient to take a photograph of the sketch with a phone, but it is important to try to be perpendicular to the sheet and not cast shadows on it. You should also avoid clear shadow on the paper otherwise you may need to invest some time to solving this in Photoshop.

03 Preparation of the base drawing: Sometimes the result from a phone is not as good as expected. This was not a problem as the adjustments I do are very simple. With Hue/Saturation (Ctrl+U) I set the saturation value to -100. Then in Levels (Ctrl+L) I moved the values of black, white and gray in order to have a better picture contrast. This adjustment, for me, was very important because it cleaned the drawing.

Sometimes, the design also presents the lines (construction lines, section lines or exploration of style) lighter, which becomes less troublesome with this technique. ▶

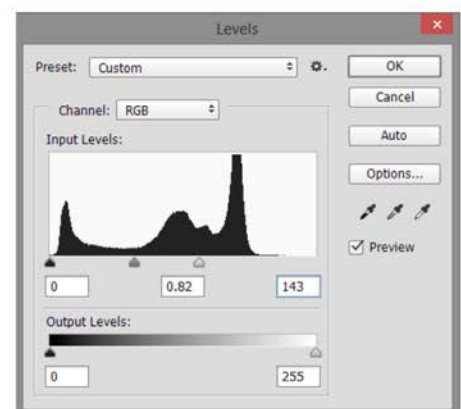
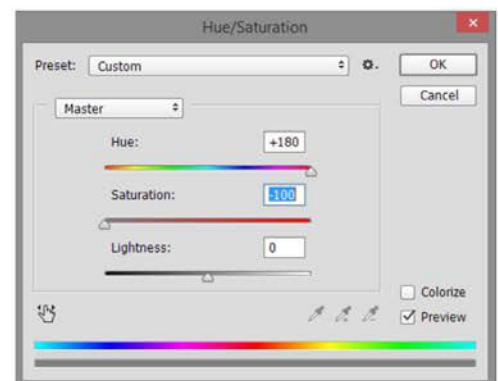
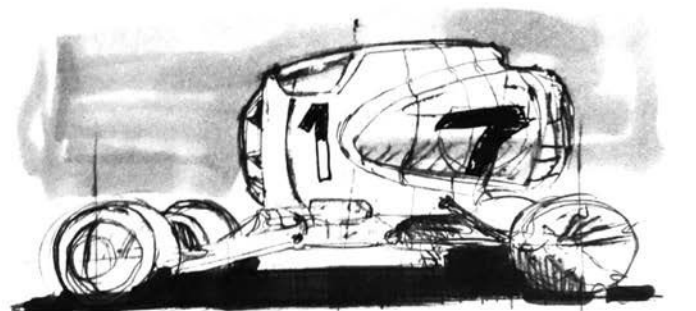
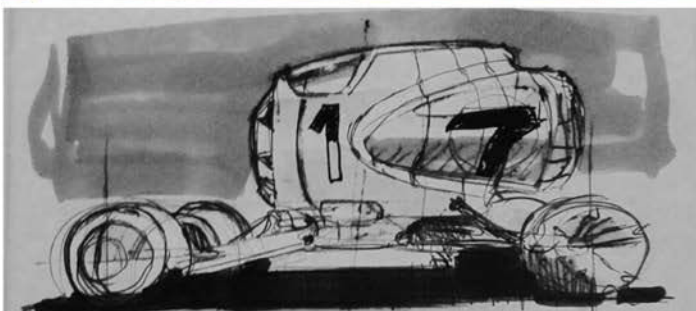
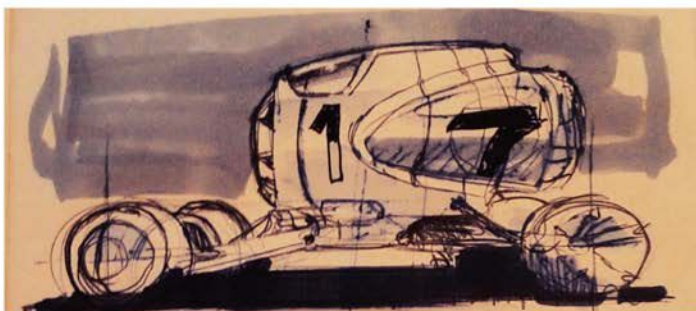


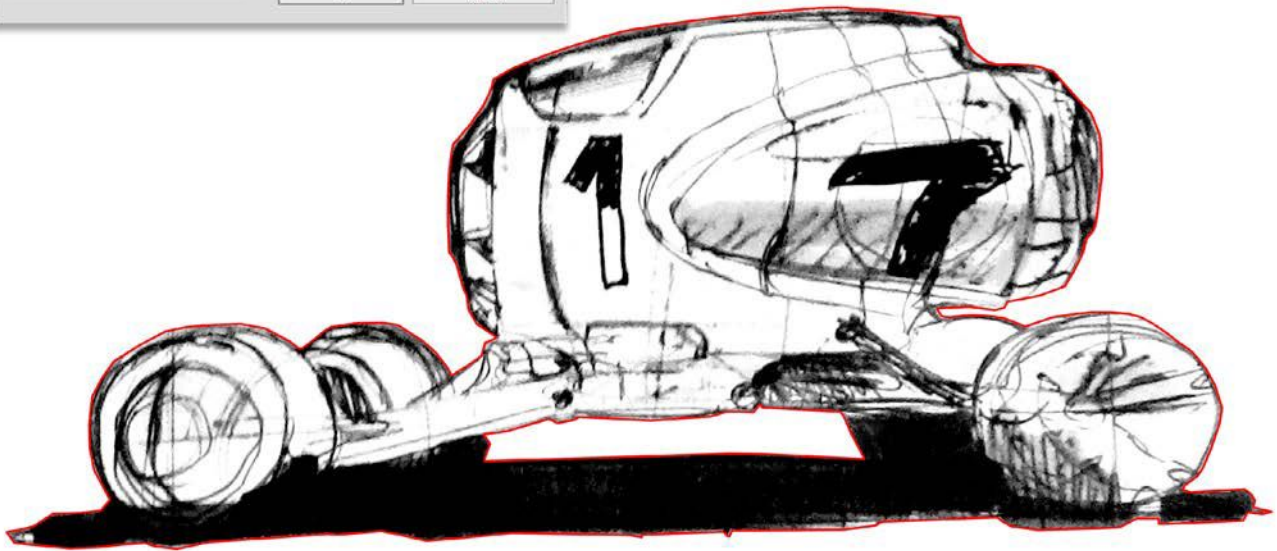
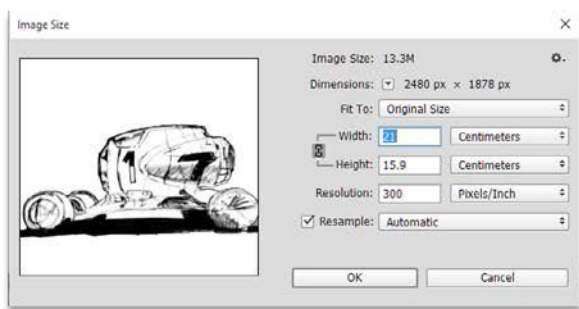
01a An overview of some of the sketches Luigi made

02 The selected drawing had an exciting and inspiring design

01b Luigi selected the sketch in the top-right corner to develop into a complete design

03 Saturation and contrast are the main parameters to explore when cleaning up the image





04

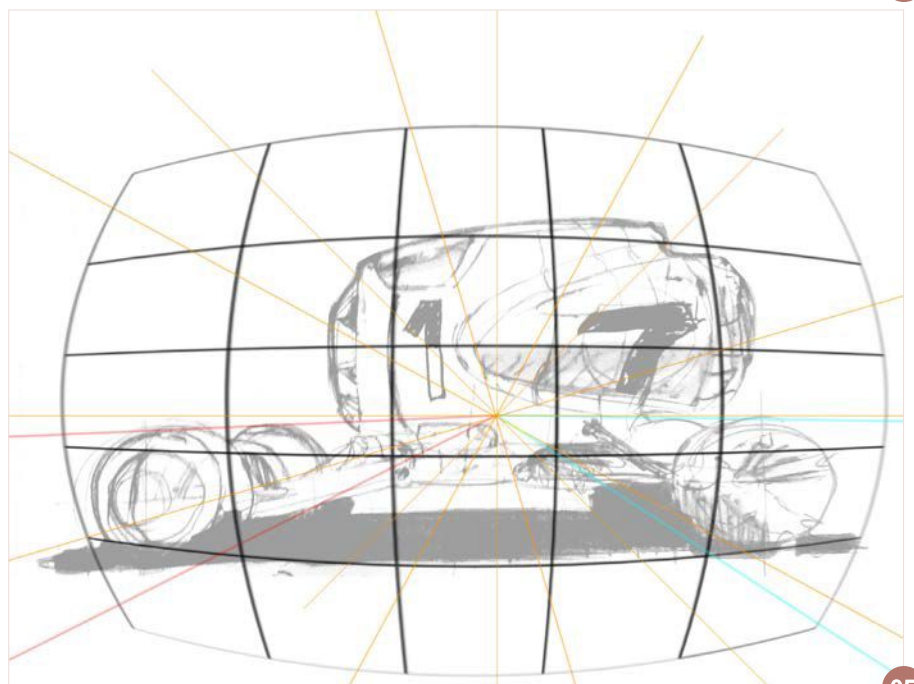
By increasing the contrast, I emphasized the most interesting lines.

04 Level zero: The clean image was then enlarged to be adapted to a slightly larger sheet (21cm x 16cm at 300dpi). The zero level was the basic level everything else would be drawn on, even the background. The problem of the cropping erasing the background was now counteracted along the edge of the vehicle.

05 Perspective and grid: To avoid unpleasant surprises later on, it's good to check that the perspective is working properly and correct it right away.

I aligned the wheels in such a way that they were on a horizontal straight line. The drawing clearly represented the side view of a vehicle, so arranging the perspective to a central vanishing point characterized the width of the vehicle.

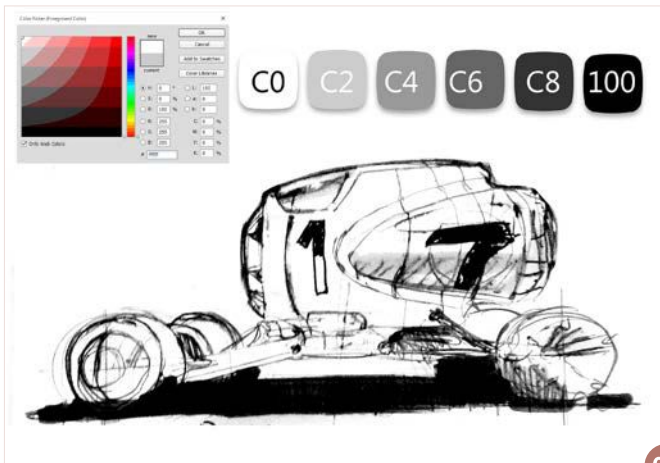
Although not completely accurate; to identify the location of the vanishing point I used the wheels as a template. The vanishing point also allows you to define the height of the horizon line. I did not want to remove the 'freshness' of the original drawing by perfectly reconstructing the geometric perspective, so I introduced the grid deformation Fisheye to try to arrange the other two axis.



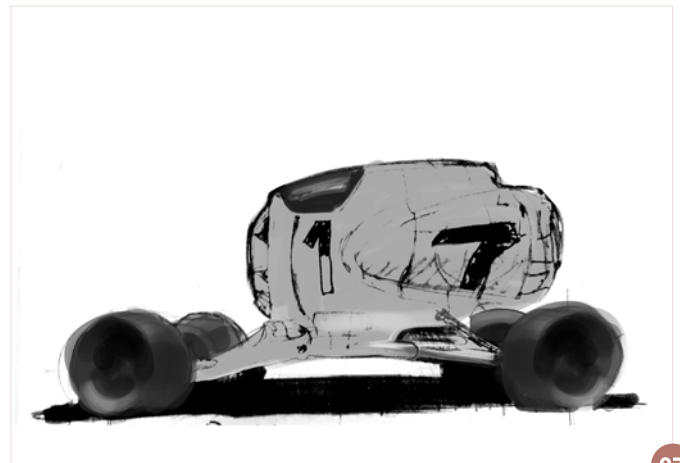
05

06 Variation of grayscale: If you look at any image completely desaturated (in black-and-white) you will be able to understand and distinguish the forms and all the elements of the scene. It follows that by properly using the shades of gray you can simply communicate volumes too. The gray value describes the volume of items aimed at the light.

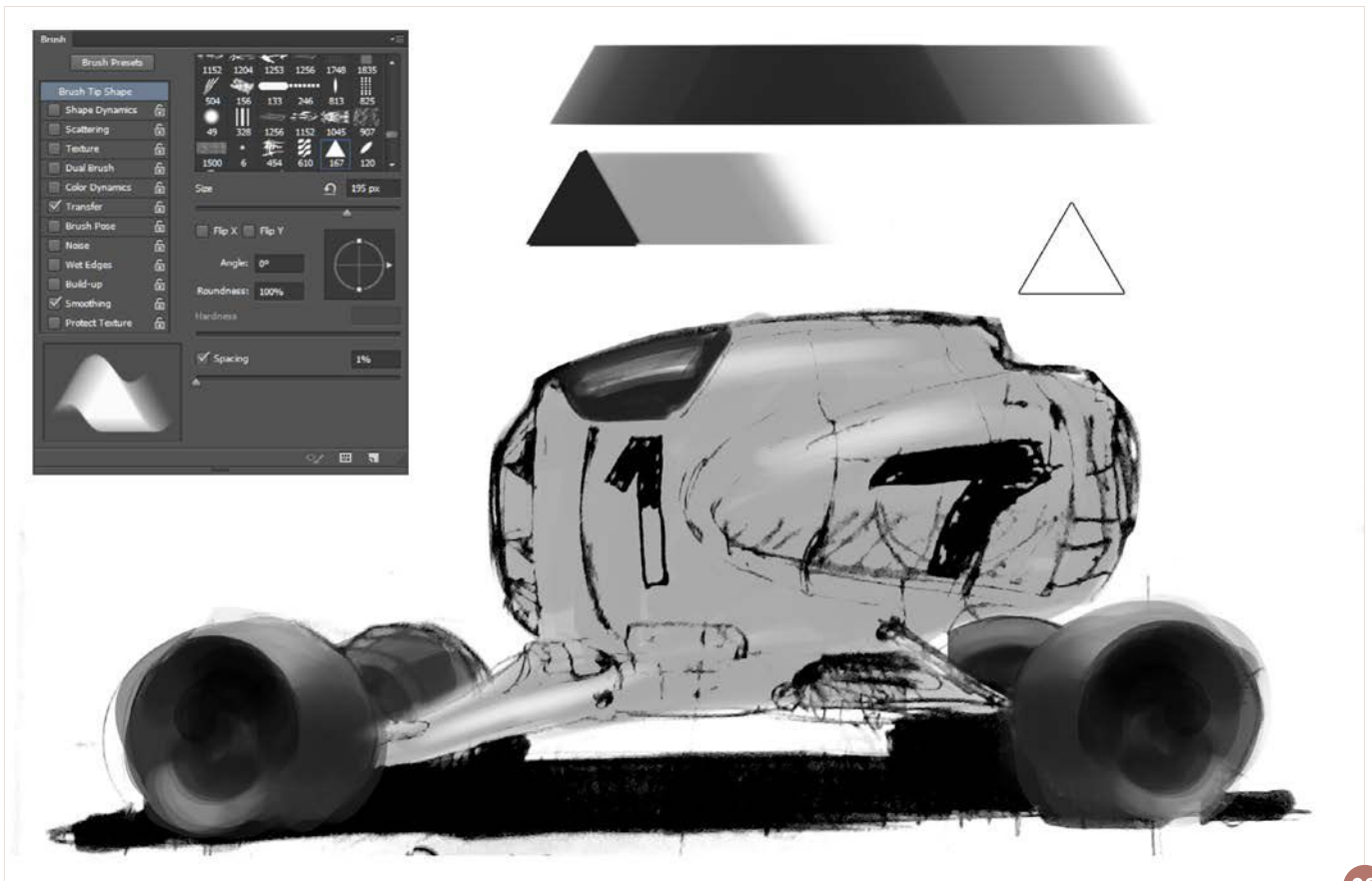
For convenience, I only used the 'Only web colors' selection on the Color Picker because it determines only four shades of gray between pure white and solid black. These four gray colors are very similar to the grayscale of markers of cold grays that I used. All other shades of gray were achieved by working with the pressure of the brush.



06



07



08

07 Main block element: This phase consisted of defining blocks to separate the key elements of the subject, or the components, with obvious contrasts of gray. My exploratory truck had a central cabin, a group of wheels and a driving windshield.

On a new layer set to Darken, I painted the central body with a series of irregular brushstrokes using C2. I did not use the Paint Bucket tool because at this stage the pressure of the brush can start to give a little texture and irregularity to the surface of the base. Having chosen a darker gray tone (but not black) I used the same method to fill the volumes of the wheels. Having a light background can still also help to define the areas where

there is more light. Using a distribution pyramid helps to create a balanced picture.

08 One brush painting: The yield of the volumes was now entrusted to the creation of the contrasts within the blocks created before. To carve out the shapes on the light-gray surface, I used darker tones of gray here in order to create shadows.

Then to sculpt the wheels and blocks which have a very dark base color, I used white and the pressure sensitivity to determine the intensity of the light and dark areas. I used an equilateral triangle brush that I had made, and activated the Transfer and Smoothing with 1% spacing. ▶

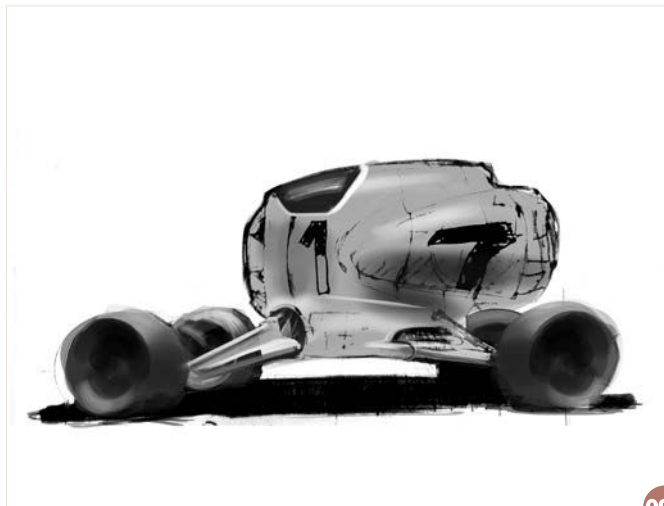
04 Resize the image so that it becomes slightly larger

05 The image is arranged and adapted to a perspective grid forming a fisheye view

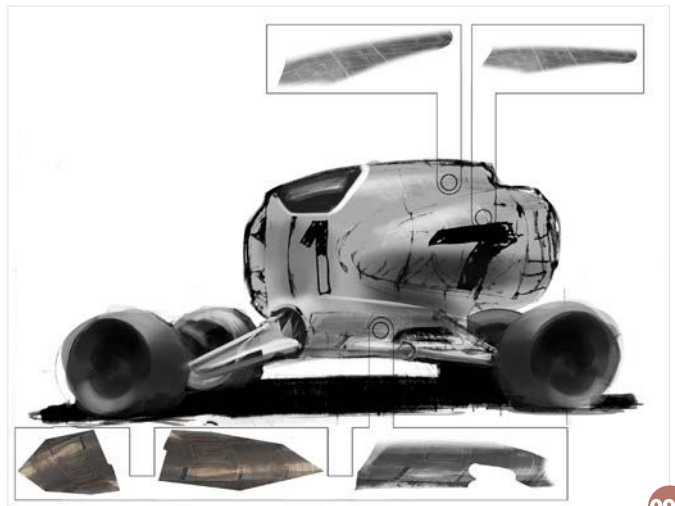
06 Select a gray scale for reference to describe the volume of the vehicle

07 The different shades of gray help separate the graphic elements within the composition

08 The brush Luigi chose was an equilateral triangle-shaped brush



09a



09b

“The advantage is that the use of the photo brings a tremendous amount of information (color, detail, light, texture) not obtainable with traditional techniques”

09 Sculpting with black-and-white: The technique I used is to sample color directly from the design and start painting in an increasingly precise way to bring out the details. The strong shadow on the ground suggests that the light comes from above so the only rule here was the use of very light-gray and dark-gray to ‘bend’ the surfaces to either turn toward the light or hide from the light. Creativity is the protagonist, so you can still explore many different design ideas at this point.

10 Textures and photobashing: The technique known as photobashing is a way to use photographs to enrich your work. The advantage is that the use of the photo brings a tremendous amount of information (color, detail, light, texture) not obtainable with traditional techniques. According to my needs here, I downloaded photos on which I worked several hours to make them unrecognizable. I looked for textures for two categories: subject textures and background textures.

I use photobashing to understand vast areas, so for this piece I chose images of fuselages of airplanes, helicopters, trucks and ships, to use as textures for the large metallic surfaces on the side of the truck. Using the Selection tool, I clipped plates and panels, and applied them over volumes using the blending mode Overlay. Overlay can make dark areas of an image appear transparent leaving only the lightest areas. In this case I created white rivets and added reflections to the edges of the plates which constitute the dark surface of the aircraft.



10



11

11 Painting over: After the first layer of textures, I then painted in a manual way. Without a precise order, I sculpted light by selecting the color with Alt in different areas to add detail with strokes of light and shadow, creating vents and fold surfaces. The color was not desaturated, but affected the texture that was applied before. Without the use of Patch I also drew the front lines where there would be a breakdown sheet.

The selection of textures was done by researching details of the picture and inserting them into areas such as the vehicle’s suspension, the pilot, and the air intake openings. A texture overlay

allows you to achieve effects of dirt and worn surfaces. Photobashing textures gave my subject volume and life because, unlike new vehicles, this vehicle had been ruined by dirt and use.

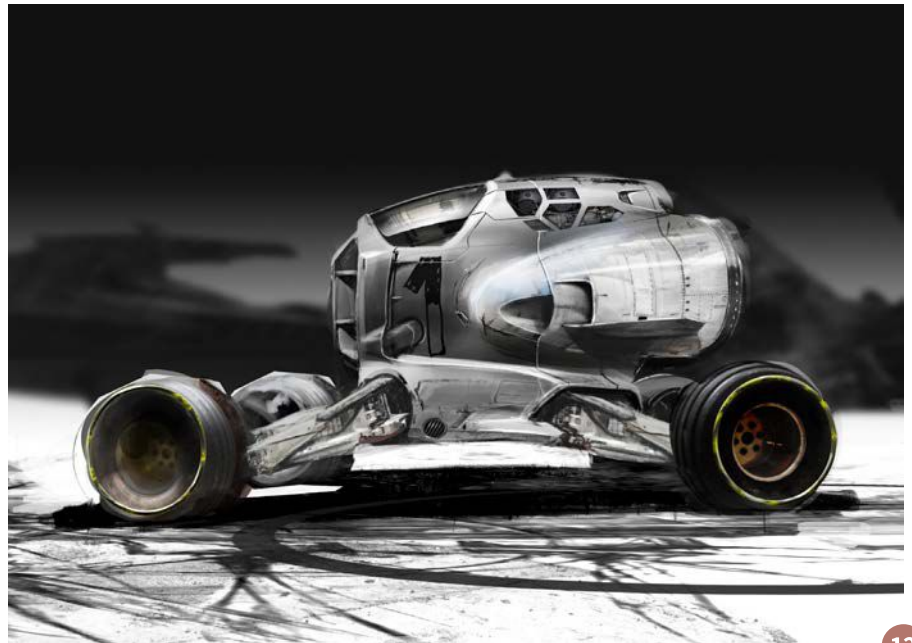
12 Background: The background in this image was just an element of the composition which would better isolate the subject. In terms of photography, to isolate a white object illuminated from above with a strong shadow on the ground, it was sufficient to enter dark elements in the background. At this stage I entered a texture of marble on the ground to add irregularities to it and give the impression of a white desert.

To insert an element of perspective I put a circle on the ground. A deformed circle immediately gives more three-dimensionality to the scene because it also creates a distance between the viewer and the subject. The background blur simulated the optical effect of a camera lens focused on the main subject.

13 Environment: The ambience of the image is the reverse process of the background: the setting attempts to place the subject in context, making it consistent with the story. In this case I decided to represent a time when the vehicle has stopped near a lake and fuel supply is low.

With a mixed media texture and painting, I added elements such as a lake, the reflection of the vehicle in the lake, and the red reflection of the lake on the white bodywork. The white smoke ahead of and behind the vehicle added volume to the entire composition.

14 Final touch: The last phase of the design is to insert elements to enhance details and make it more alive. I added graphics such as yellow stripes that help the viewer to better understand the shape of the surfaces, the writing and the signs that recall the graphics that are on military vehicles. I then added more smoke to slightly increase the depth of the scene. ●



09a A slightly concave intersection creates the central volume and the rear volume is a sphere

09b Large textures are applied to the image and photobashed using Overlay

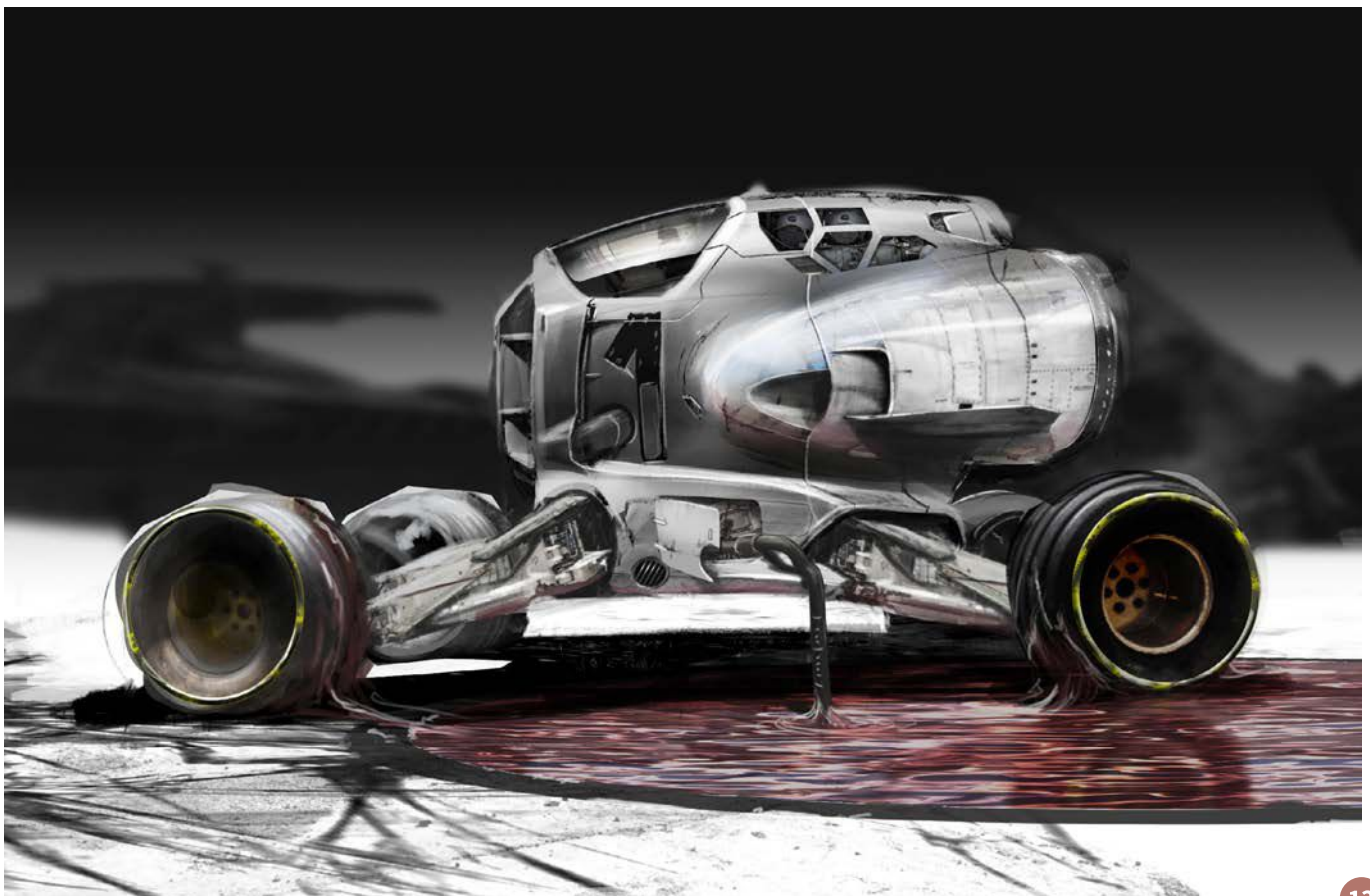
10 Pull out volumes using black-and-white to create light and shadow

11 Repeat the photobashing to give the image greater detail and interest

12 A suitable background is essential to enhance the subject, creating a three-dimensional scene

13 After the design rendering, you can develop the drawing into an illustration

12



13

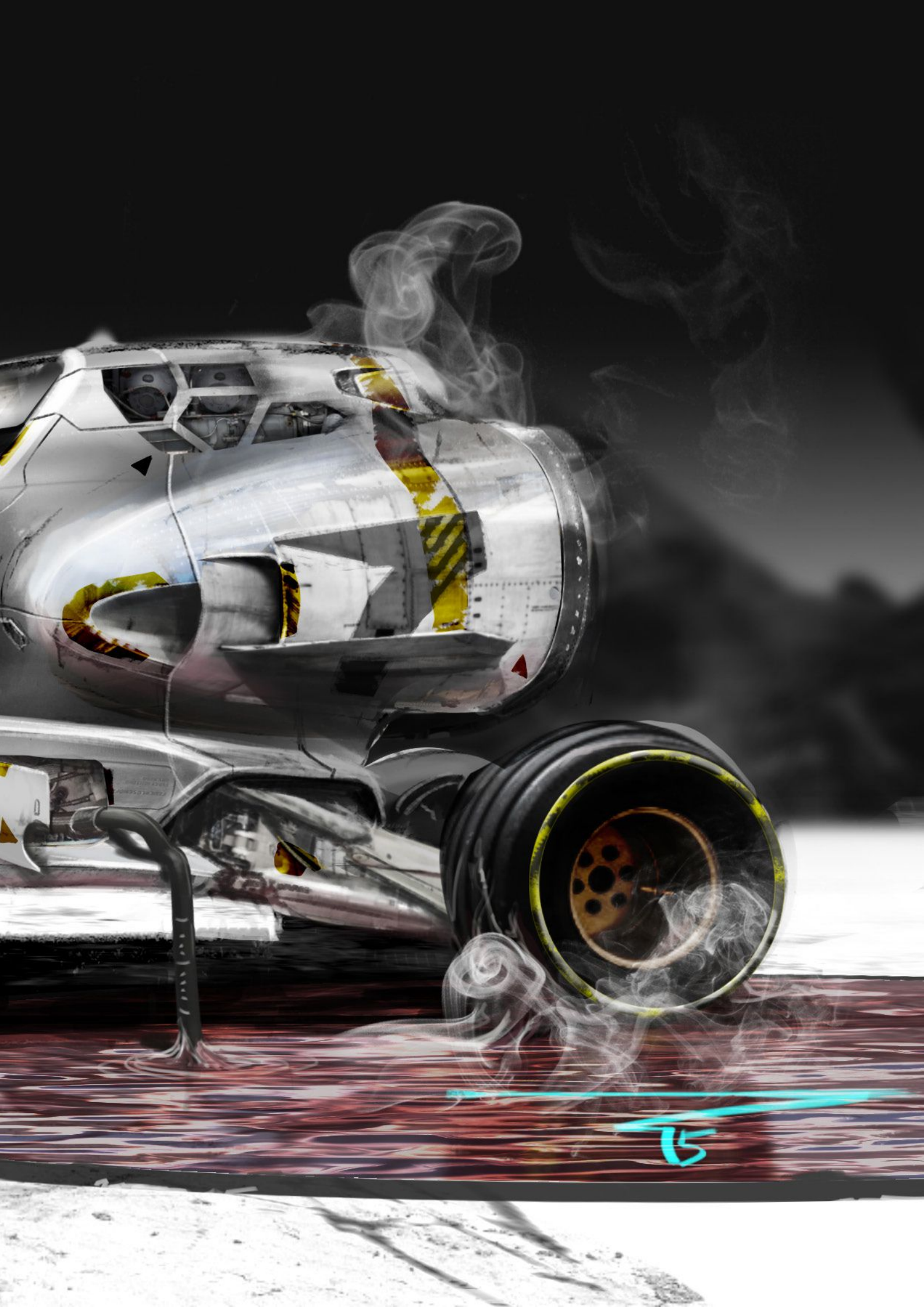
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Luigi Memola

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DIGITAL ART MASTER: **Alien Jungle** by Arthur Haas

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The Artist



Arthur Haas
ahaas.nl

Software Used:
Photoshop

Arthur Haas is a concept artist and illustrator from Amsterdam, Netherlands with a passion for science fiction. He has worked on a variety of book and film project since 2011.

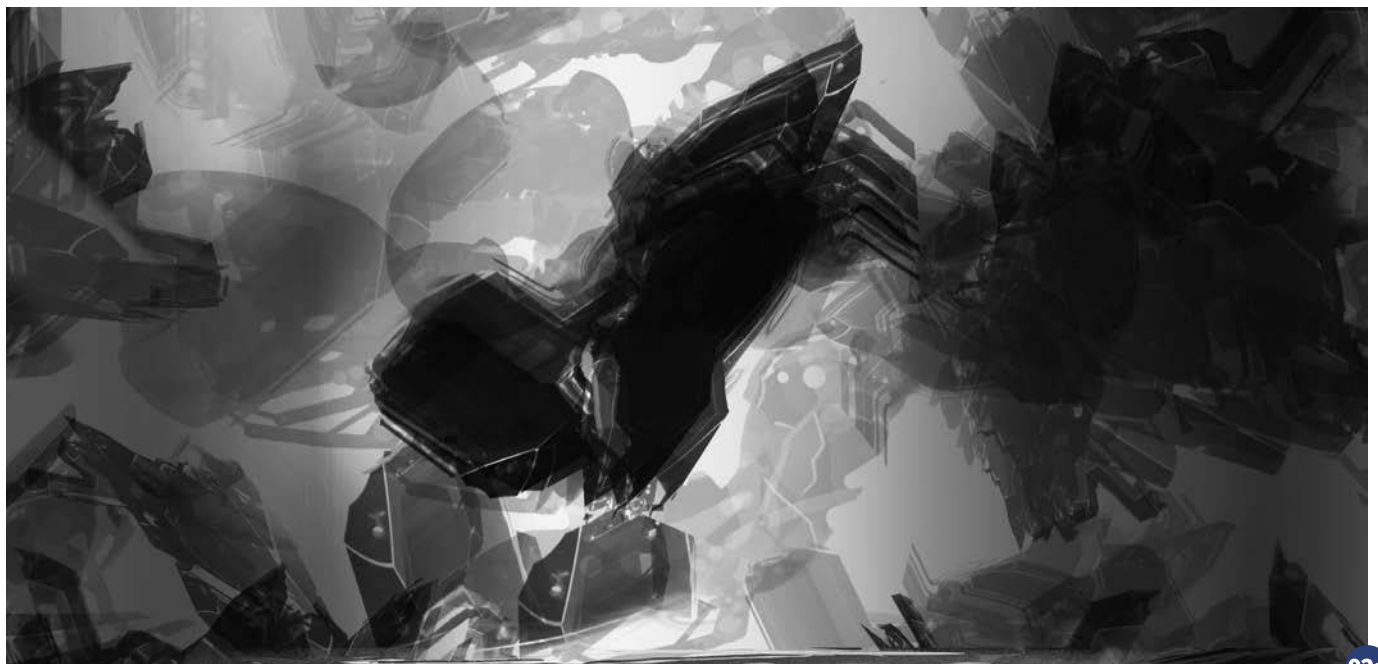
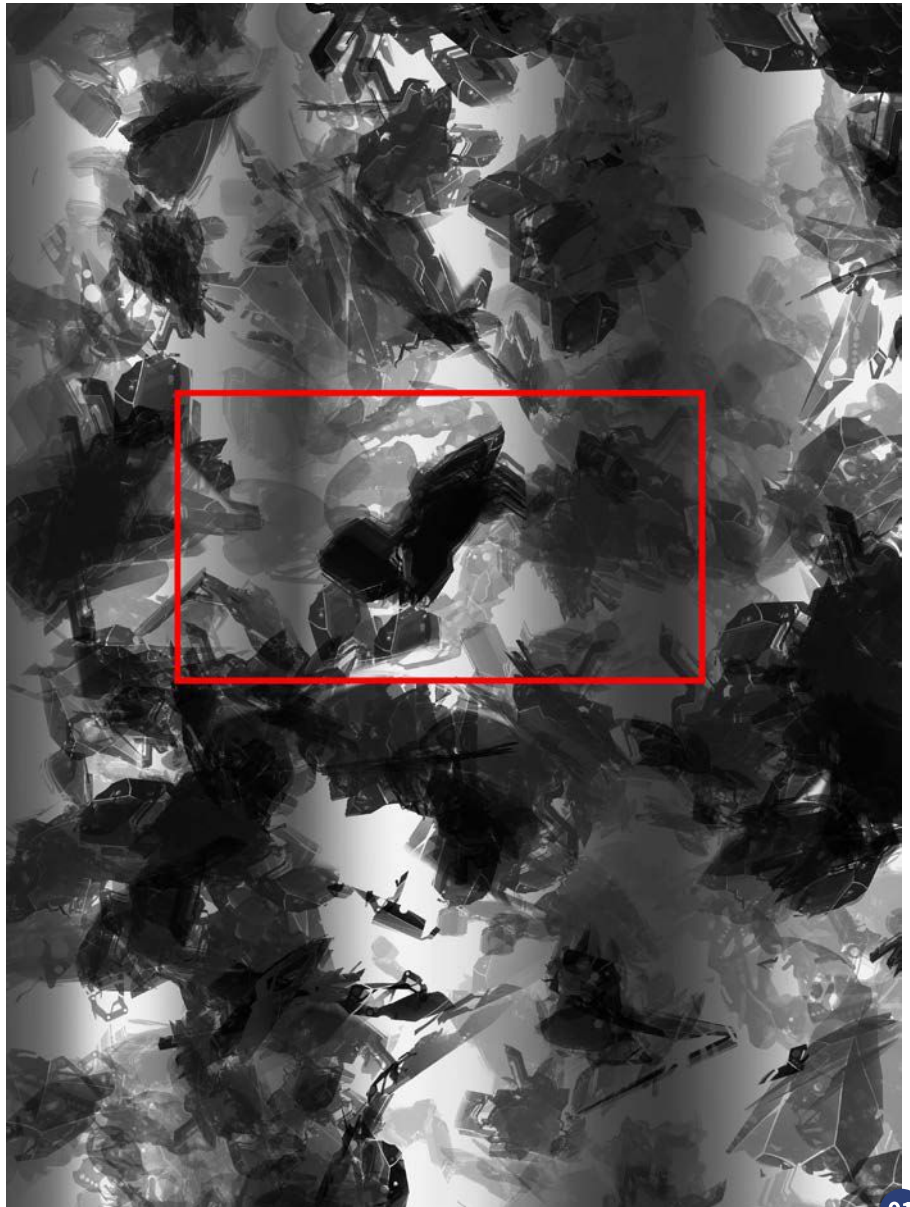
My favorite subject to study is, by far, alien jungles. I'd rather be able to actually explore these strange and exciting places in person, but the next best thing is definitely painting them. Whenever I allow myself to dive into these worlds I try to make my images into an invitation for the viewer to join me.

I guess it's the endless possibilities alien life forms could offer, a freedom to create anything I like. I use Photoshop for this because for me it's the best way to create randomness by using custom brushes and so achieve happy accidents in shape and structures. I find this method more playful than planning out my images.

It becomes more of an exploration this way. This image took me around 20 hours to make and was one of my first creations where I didn't struggle with the composition, a factor I often I feel less confident about.

Finding a composition

Scott Robertson's method for finding composition really works for me (you can find his video on this method on Youtube under 'custom brushes and actions'). Basically what it entails is this: you make a huge file with several linear gradations for the background and on different layers you start to throw your custom brushes in varying opacities and sizes (Fig. 1). You can then zoom in and start looking around for interesting shapes and compositions, turning layers on and off to suit your taste until you find one, or indeed several that you like. You then use the rectangular marquee tool to select that section of the image.





02b

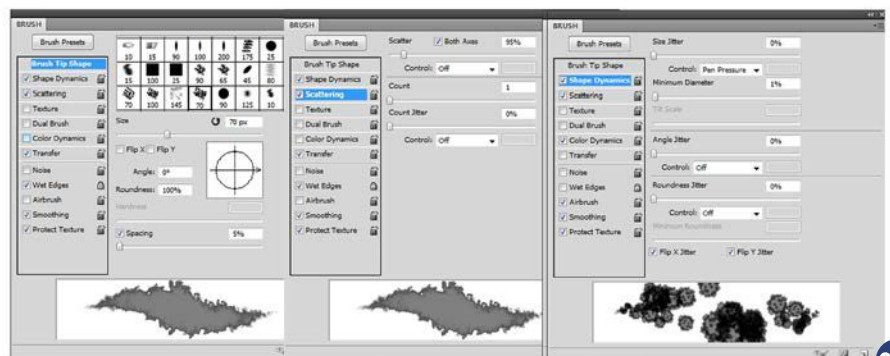
What I did slightly different from Scott was, instead of copy and pasting this selection into a new file (and thereby flattening it), I cropped the entire image to that selection and saved it under a completely different name, thereby keeping the individual layers.

Custom brushes on the fly

I resized the new image and added some horizontal strokes until I started to see something new in it. I used a palette knife brush, which is a normal round brush flattened with the angle control option (under shape dynamics) set to pen tilt, or rotation if you use an art pen (Fig 2a).

That black shape started to become a tree or fungus-like growth. I put my usual solitary exploring alter ego under it, staring up in wonder. I also added a little bit of detail here to several of the background elements in the lower half of the image, just playing around with them really. The main growth also got some translucent sacks hanging under it and some flower or pod-like shapes (Fig. 2b).

These last shapes (Fig. 2c) came from a brush I quickly made from a textured brush (1) with scattering on both axes and wet edges and then this applied in a dot pattern around a circle shape (3). I then made it into a brush, playing with the spacing, scattering and flipped x/y jitter for a natural, random effect.



02c

Adding color and mood

It was time to add some color! I find it best not to wait too long with doing this as it gets increasingly complicated when there is a large amount of detail and the number of layers has

increased. This was the first image where I used this particular composition-finding technique and one thing I learned was that it is better to add color even earlier than I did here: ideally, immediately after finding the initial composition. ►

01 Arthur found the composition by selecting the sections of the image he found interesting. He then flipped the image and looked again

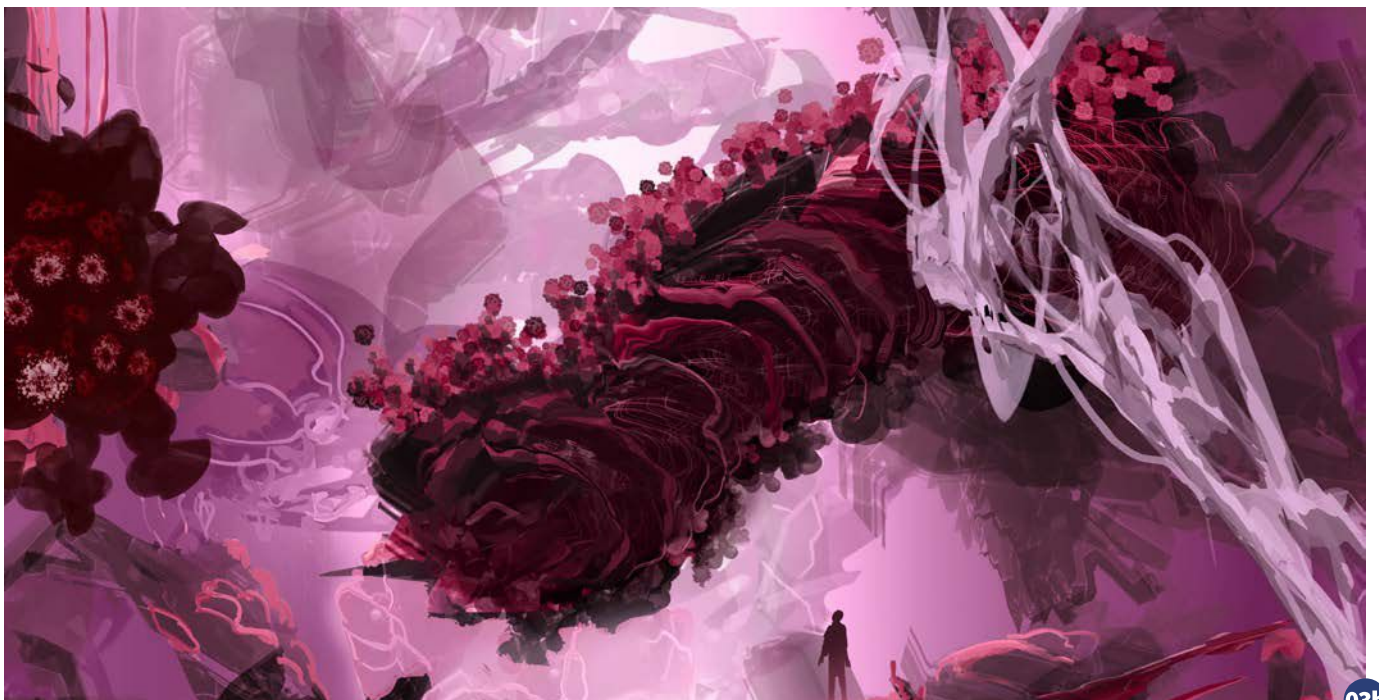
02a Suddenly there's water and boulders with a huge central black shape protruding from the right side

02b Developing shapes into compositional elements

02c Playing around with settings like spacing, scattering and flipping x/y jitter can give chaotic and therefore natural looking effects



03a



03b

Usually I prefer colors that aren't too close to what we're used to seeing around us as this can add to the alien mood. In this case I chose a pinkish purple palette which is the opposite of the green/blue colors we normally associate with nature. Like the shapes I have used, the color choice indicated that this place was different.

Playing with adding detail

Once the elements and colors were in place I started adding detail to the main shapes and

background. Playing is the right word for this process as it doesn't need much mental activity.

I used the smear tool quite a bit at this stage which is great for adding some natural flow into the sometimes blocky shapes of custom brushes (Fig. 4a). If you use it too much however, the whole image will become blurry. During these processes I also kept things like direct and indirect lighting in mind. The lighting is diffused and shines from above, which is a simple effect

that mimics natural lighting as well as allowing me to stay focused on shape.

I arranged the different distances on separate layers so it was easy to add detail and some fog to create an atmospheric perspective. I painted some moss on the shape in the distance with a regular brush and added some wispy tendrils with a custom brush which consists of a few small dots placed vertically and spacing of 1%, angle set to pen tilt/rotation.



04a

The boulders below were detailed with a colored pattern using a regular round brush smeared at 98% and the same flowery brush which was used at the water's edge (Fig. 4b). Finally, I added more detail to the tree shape in the foreground using a texture brush in overlay mode. With another custom brush I added a spine of protrusions which I smeared into the trunk (Fig. 4c).

In the foreground I used that same flower/pod brush from earlier, placed them on stilts as tall plant life, adding more depth to the image. On 3dtotal's website I found some bird brushes, of which I used a few to add life to the scene. I tweaked the hue/saturation and contrast settings with adjustment layers and called it finished.

Conclusion

What I noticed when making this image was that subject does matter to me. It's easy to get caught in trying to do cool things you see others do which usually ends in disappointment. Some themes, however, come naturally to me, such as this alien jungle.

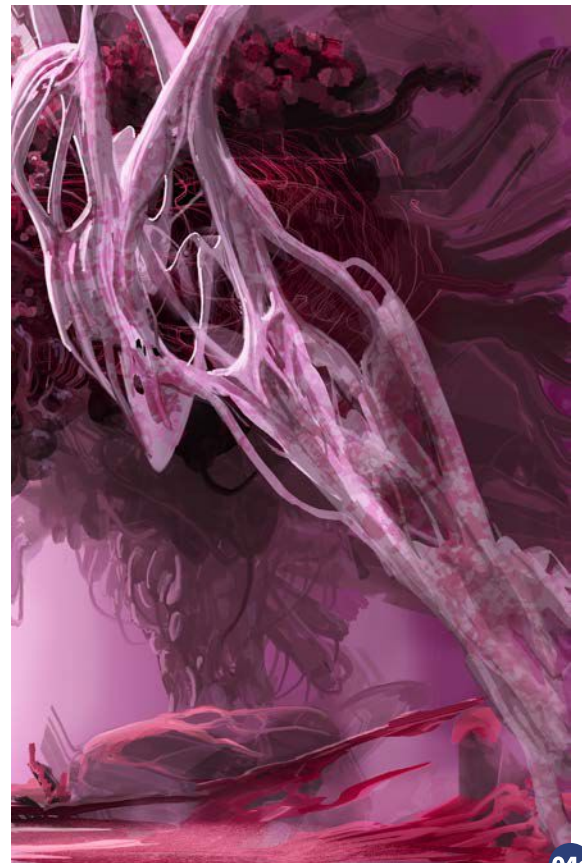
I believe that if you paint what you love, you will become better at it in a playful way which will show in your work. Since this image, I've been making the most of my personal work by employing this composition finding method of scanning that huge file, flipping it, finding an interesting view and then the journey can begin. ●



04b

03a Colors tend to be more saturated towards the foreground then increasingly bend into the horizon

03b Arthur added some dark colors to the left side as he felt the image was out of balance. He also added another element in the near foreground on the right. This had to be a light shape for tonal balance



04c

04a Adding some wavy patterns to the main shape created more volume

04b Rendering the background detail

04c Detailing the foreground

The Artist



Arthur Haas
ahaas.nl







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